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THE DRAMATIST.

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THE

DRAMATIST.

A

COMEDY,

IN

FIVE ACTS.

WRITTEN BY

——— REYNOLDS, Esq.

Author of WERTER, &c.

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M,DCC,XC.

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57
AUG

PROLOGUE.

IN this bleſt land, thro' eve'ry varying age,
Public and private life have had their rage.
In good King Arthur's days, with cumb'rous ſhield,
The Iron champions pranc'd upon the field,
Relentleſs beauty bade the knights advance,
And bear the rage romantic on their lance.
From length of time this fury found it's death,
And wiſer faſhions mark'd Elizabeth.
Her modeſt dames were form'd of mildeſt ſtuff,
But check'd preſumption by a monſtrous ruff,
Their breakfaſt rage *all delicacy ſhocks,*
Early they pick'd the pinions of an ox,
Then rode in ſtate behind the ſcepter'd fair,
On horſe-back——full as well as my Lord Mayor.
Theſe modes howe'er are alter'd, and of late,
Beef, but not modeſty is out of date,
For now inſtead of rich ſirloins, we ſee,
Green calipaſh, and yellow callipee,
Now ladies ſhine from Phaetons afar,
And very ſoon perhaps may learn to ſpar,
At leiſure hours they work ſettees, and chairs,
Or waſte their youth on puddings, or on prayers,
Each modeſt dame may quit her cara ſpoſa,
To take a hug with Humphries or Mendoza.
As thus the manners differ, writers try,
To trace the whimſical variety,
With obſervation juſt, and mirror true,
Preſent each reigning folly to the view.
Yet, hold, our author's ſcene all rage *outgoes,*
A new, excentric character he ſhews;
No doughty Quixotte, and no modern fighter,
A dramatizing hero, play---inditer,

One

One who to gain applauſe, like wits in vogue,
Torments with Prologue, or with Epilogue.
At every houſe with incident *he meets*
And thinks he ſees proceſſions---in the ſtreets,
In common life will unities expect
Looks up to politicks for ſtage effect,
And ſo miſled, that if his wife ſhould die,
" She's made a charming exit," he would cry.
But let me not our Comedy foreſtal,
Or court your judgment till the curtain fall,
Mean while we'll ſtrive your patience to beguile
And win from lovelieſt lips the bright'ning ſmile.
Such as it is we give it to your view,
And truſt our cauſe to candour, *and to you.*

Dramatis Perſonæ.

Vapid,	Mr. CHERRY.
Lord Scratch,	Mr. O'REILLY.
Ennui,	Mr. BROWN.
Willoughby,	Mr. SWINDAL.
Peter	Mr. SIMPSON.
Florivelle,	Mr. HAMERTON.
Neville,	Mr. PALMER.

Louiſa Courtney,	Miſs EDMEAD.
Marianne,	Mrs. HITCHCOCK
Lady Waitfort,	Mrs. HEAPHY.
Letty,	Mrs. CHERRY.

THE DRAMATIST.

ACT. I.

SCENE—*A Grove—Lady Waitfort's Houſe.*

Enter MARIANNE *and* LETTY *from the houſe.*

MARIANNE.

BUT I tell you I will come out—I didn't come to Bath to be confin'd, nor I won't—I hate all their company but ſweet Miſs Courtney's.

Letty. Why I declare Miſs Marianne, you grow worſe and worſe every day, your country manners will be the ruin of you.

Mar. Don't talk about that Letty, it was a ſhame to bring me up in the country! If I had been properly taken care of I might have done great things, I might have married the Poet I danc'd with at the ball, but it's all over now—I ſhall never get a huſband, and what's worſe my aunt did it on purpoſe! She ruin'd me, Letty, that nobody elſe might.

Letty. How you talk! I hope Miſs Courtney hasn't taught you all this.

Mar. No, ſhe's a dear creature! ſhe has taught me many things, but nothing improper, I'm ſure.

Letty. Pray has ſhe taught you why ſhe never plays any tune but the one we heard juſt now?

Mar. Yes, and if you'll keep it a ſecret I'll tell you, Letty; Mr. Harry Neville taught it her laſt ſummer, and now ſhe is always playing it becauſe it puts her in mind of the dear man, when it is ended don't you obſerve how ſhe ſighs from the bottom of her dear little heart.

Letty. Why I thought they had quarrell'd?

Mar. So they have, ſhe won't ſee him, and I believe my aunt Lady Waitſort has been the occaſion of it: Poor Mr. Neville! I wiſh I could aſſiſt him! for indeed Letty, I always pity any body that has been croſs'd in love—it may be one's own caſe one day or other, you know.

Letty. True, and for the ſame reaſon, I ſuppoſe you rejoice when it is ſucceſsful? I am ſure now the intended marriage of Lady Waitſort and Lord Scratch gives you pleaſure?

Mar. What, the country gentleman who has lately come to the title? no if you'll believe me I don't like him at all, he's a ſour old fellow, is always abuſing our ſex, and thinks there is only one good woman under Heaven, now I'm ſure that's a miſtake; for I know I'm a good woman, and I think, Letty, you are another?

Letty. Yes, I hope ſo, tho' I confeſs I think your aunt a better than either of us.

Mar. More ſhame for you, ſhe is a woman of ſentiment, and hums you over with her ſentiments and flouriſhes about purity and feelings! faith ſhe ought to be aſhamed of herſelf! no other woman would talk in that manner.

Letty. You miſtake her, ſhe is a woman of virtue, and can't help feeling for the vices and misfortunes of others.

Mar. Then why can't ſhe do as I have done, Letty? keep her feelings to herſelf—If I had given way to them half as much as ſhe has—Oh Lord! I don't know what might have been the conſequences?

Letty. For ſhame! you never hear Lady Waitfort ſpeak ill of any body.

Mar.

Mar. No, how ſhou'd ſhe, when ſhe ſpeaks of nobody but herſelf.

Letty. Well your opinion is of little weight—My Lord ſees her merit, and is come to Bath on purpoſe to marry her—He thinks her a prodigy of goodneſs.

Mar. Then pray let him have her; every fool knows; ſo to be ſure does he Letty, that a prodigy of goodneſs is a very rare thing—but when he finds her out? faith it will be a rare joke when he finds her out.

Letty. Shameful, Miſs Marianne! pray do ſpeak a little intelligibly, and remember your aunt's favourite obſervation.

Mar. What is it, I have forgot?

Letty. That good ſentiments are always plain.

Mar. Yes, ſo are good women—bid her remember that, Letty.

Letty. Huſh! ſay no more, here ſhe comes, and Mr. Willoughby with her.

Mar. Ay, that man is always with her of late, but come Letty, let's get out of her way, let's take a walk and look at the Beaux.

Letty. The beaux! ah, I ſee you long to become a woman of faſhion. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LADY WAITFORT, WILLOUGHBY *and* SERVANT.

Lady W. When my Lord returns, tell him I'm gone to Lady Walton's, and ſhall be back immediately. [*Exit Serv.*

Will. Then your Ladyſhip is certain Harry Neville is return'd?

Lady W. Yes, the ungrateful man arrived laſt night, and as I yet mean to conſult his happineſs, I have written to him to come to me this evening, but I will ever oppoſe his union with my Lord's ward, Louiſa Courtney, becauſe I think it will be the ruin of them both; and you know Willoughby one cannot forget their feelings on theſe occaſions.

Will. Certainly—but Ennui the time-killer whoſe only being in life is to murder the hours is alſo juſt arrived, and my Lord is reſolved on his marrying Louiſa

inſtantly, only becauſe he'll make a quiet member for his borough in the weſt.

Lady W. True, but for various reaſons, I am determined ſhe ſhall be yours, yet it muſt be done artfully—my circumſtances are derang'd and an alliance with my Lord is my only hope of relief, ſuch are the fruits of virtue Willoughby!

Will. Well, but her fortune is entirely dependant on my Lord's conſent, and how is that to be obtained? You know I'm no favourite and Floriville is a great one.

Lady W. I know it—and therefore we muſt incenſe him againſt Floriville—let me ſee, can't we contrive ſome mode—ſome little ingenious ſtory—he is a ſingular character you know, and has violent prejudices.

Will. True, and of all his prejudices, none are ſo violent or ſo entertaining as that againſt authors and actors.

Lady W. Yes, the ſtage is his averſion, and ſome way or other—I have it—it's an odd thought, but may do much, ſuppoſe we tell him Floriville has written a *play?*

Will. The luckieſt thought in the world, it will make him hate him directly.

Lady W. Well, leave it to me—I'll explain the matter to him myſelf, and my life on't it proves ſucceſsful; you ſee Willoughby my only ſyſtem is to promote happineſs.

Will It is indeed Lady Waitfort—but if this fails may I ſtill hope for your intereſt with Miſs Courtney?

Lady W. Yes, I'm determin'd ſhe ſhall be your's and neither Neville's nor Ennui's—but come it's late, and here he is, we'll get rid of him.

Enter ENNUI.

Lady W. Mr. Ennui, your ſervant, we were going to the parade—have you ſeen your couſin Neville?

Enn. I've an idea—I've juſt left him.

Lady W. I ſuppoſe we ſhall ſee you at Lady Walton's in the evening—'till when adieu.

[*Exeunt.*

Enn. I've an idea, I don't like this lady Waitfort, ſhe wiſhes to trick me out of my match with Miſs Courtney, and if I could trick her in return—(*takes out*

and his watch) how goes the *enemy*? Only one o'clock —thought it had been that an hour ago—heigho! —here's my patron Lord Scratch.

Enter LORD SCRATCH.

Lord S. What wonderful virtue in the art of hearing, may I die if a liſtener is to be found any where—Zounds! am not I a peer, and don't I talk by prerogative? And if I mayn't talk ten times as much as another perſon what's the uſe of my peerage?

Enn. I've an idea—I don't comprehend you.

Lord S. That fellow Neville, wouldn't hear a word I had to ſay! abandoned young dog! he's come to Bath to invent tales againſt that divinity Lady Waitfort again I ſuppoſe. But my ward Louiſa ſhall be put out of his power for ever. She ſhall marry you to-morrow.

Enn. In fact I always forget to give your Lordſhip joy of your title, tho' not of your dreſs.

Lord S. Not of my dreſs! ay, ay—there's the difference—you poor devils in humble life are obliged to dreſs well to look like gentlemen—we peers may dreſs as we pleaſe (*looking* at his *watch*) but I ſhall loſe my appointment—paſt two o'clock.

Enn. Paſt two o'clock! delightful!

Lord S. Delightful! what at your old tricks?

Enn. I've an idea—it had been only one.

Lord S. And you're delighted becauſe it is an hour later.

Enn. To be ſure I am my dear friend—to be ſure I am—the enemy has loſt a limb!

Lord S. So you are happier becauſe you're an hour nearer the other world! Tell me now do you wiſh to die?

Enn. No, but I wiſh ſomebody would invent a new mode of killing time—in fact, I think I've found one—private acting.

Lord S. Acting! never talk to me about the ſtage—I deteſt the theatre and every thing that belongs to it—and if ever—but no matter—I muſt to Lady Waitfort and prevail on her to marry me, at the ſame time

you marry my ward—but remember our agreement—you are to ſettle your eſtate on Louiſa and I am to bring you into parliament.

Enn. In fact I comprehend—I am to be a hearer and not a ſpeaker.

Lord S. Speaker? if you open your mouth the Chiltern Hundreds will be your portion—look'ye—you are to be led gently to the right ſide—to ſleep during the debate—give a nod for your vote, and in every reſpect move like a mandarine at my command—in ſhort you are to be a mandarine member, ſo farewell.

Enn. I've an idea, here's Neville! In fact he knows nothing of my marrying Louiſa—nor ſhall he till after the happy day. Strange news Neville!

Enter NEVILLE.

Nev. I've heard it all, Louiſa's going to be married, and my Lord perſiſts in his fatal attachment to Lady Waitfort.

Enn. In fact! why fatal!

Nev. Becauſe it is the ſource of every miſchief—while ſhe maintains her power over him, I have no hope of love or fortune—when my father died he left his eſtate to my brother relying on my Lord providing for me, and now he deſerts me and all owing to the artifices of an inſidious woman.

Enn. I've an idea, I comprehend her motive. She loves you!

Nev. Yes, 'tis too plain, and becauſe I would not liſten to her advances, ſhe has ruined me in my uncle's opinion, and degraded me in Louiſa's; but I will ſee Miſs Courtney myſelf, I will hear my doom from her own mouth, and if ſhe avoids me I'll leave her and this country for ever.

Enter PETER *with a letter.*

Peter. A letter Sir.

Nev. Without a direction! What can it mean?

Peter. Sir, 'tis from Lady Waitfort, the ſervant who brought it ſaid her Ladyſhip had reaſons for not directing

directing it, which ſhe would explain to you when ſhe ſaw you.

Nev. Oh the old ſtratagem, as it is not directed ſhe may ſwear it was deſigned for another perſon, (*reads*) "Sir, I have heard of your arrival at Bath, and "ſtrange as my conduct may appear, I think it a duty "I owe the virtuous part of mankind to promote their "happineſs as much as I can, I have long beheld your "merit and long wiſh'd to encourage it, I ſhall be at "home at ſix this evening—Your's

"A. WAITFORT."

Enn. In fact a very ſentimental aſſignation, that wou'd as well do for any other man.

Nev. If I ſhew it to my Lord, I know his bigotry is ſuch that he wou'd (as uſual) only ſuppoſe it a trick of my own, the more cauſe there is to condemn, the more he approves.

Enn. I've an idea he's incomprehenſible—in fact who have we got here?

Nev. As I live, Vapid the dramatic author, he is come to Bath to pick up characters I ſuppoſe.

Enn. In fact—pick up!

Nev. Yes, he has the ardor ſcribendi upon him ſo ſtrong, that he wou'd rather you'd aſk him to write an Epilogue to a new play than offer him your whole eſtate. The theatre is his world, in which are included all his hopes and wiſhes, in ſhort he is a dramatic maniac.

Enn. Has he not a ſhare of vanity in his compoſition?

Nev. Oh, yes, he fancies himſelf a great favourite with the women.

Enn. Then I've an idea, I've got a thought by which you may revenge yourſelf on Lady Waitfort—In fact—give him the letter—he'll certainly believe 'tis meant for himſelf.

Nev. My dear friend, a thouſand thanks, we'll flatter his vanity by perſuading him ſhe's young and beautiful, and my life on't it does wonders—but huſh here he comes.

Enter

Enter VAPID.

New. Vapid, I rejoice to ſee you! 'tis a long time ſince we met, give me leave to introduce you to a particular friend of mine—Mr. Ennui—Mr. Vapid!

Enn. I've an idea, you do me honour. Mr. Vapid I ſhall be proud to be better acquainted with you—in fact, any thing new in the literary world?

Vap. Some whiſpers about a new pantomime Sir, nothing elſe.

New. And I'm afraid in the preſent ſcarcity of good writers, we have little elſe to expect—pray Vapid how is the preſent dearth of genius to be accounted for—particularly dramatic genius?

Vap. Why as to dramatic genius, Sir, the fact is this, to give a true picture of life a man ſhould enter into all its ſcenes; ſhould follow nature Sir, but modern authors plunder from one another, the mere ſhade of ſhadows; now Sir, for my part I dive into the world, I ſearch deep into the heart of man, 'tis true I'm call'd a rake, but upon my ſoul, I only game, drink and intrigue, that I may be better able to dramatize each particular ſcene.

New. A good excuſe for profligacy—but tell me Vapid, have you got any new character ſince you came to Bath?

Vap. Faith—only two—and thoſe not very new either.

Enn. In fact—may we aſk what they are?

Vap. If neither of you write!

New. We certainly do not.

Vap. Then I'll tell you—the firſt is a charitable divine, who in the weighty conſideration how he ſhall laviſh his generoſity, never beſtows it at all—and the other is a cautious apothecary who in determining which of two medicines is beſt for his patient, lets him die for want of aſſiſtance—you underſtand me, I think the laſt will do ſomething, Eh?

Enn. I've an idea—the apothecary would cut a good figure in a comedy.

Vapid. A Comedy! pſha! I mean him for a tragedy.

Enn.

Enn. In fact I don't comprehend, nor poſſibly the town.

Vap. Now that's the very thing—hark'ye I've found out a ſecret—what every body underſtands, nobody approves, and people always applaud moſt where they leaſt comprehend—there is a refinement Sir, in appearing to underſtand things incomprehenſible—elſe whence ariſes the pleaſure at an Opera, a private Play, or a Speech in Parliament? Why 'tis the myſtery in all theſe things—'tis the deſire to find out what nobody elſe can—to be thought wiſer than others—therefore you take me, the Apothecary is the hero of my tragedy.

New. Faith there is ſome reaſon in all this, and I'm amaz'd we have ſo many writers for the Stage.

Vap. So am I—and I think I'll write no more for an ungrateful public—you don't know any body that has a Play coming out do you?

New. No, why do you aſk?

Vap. He'll want an Epilogue you know that's all.

New. You won't write one, will you?

Vap. I! oh lord! no, I won't write one; but genius you know ought to be encouraged, and as he's a friend of your's—what's the name of the play?

New. I really don't know any body has written one.

Vap. Yes, yes, you do you queer dog.

New. Upon my word I do not—a couſin of mine indeed wrote one for his own amuſement, but I don't think he could ever be prevail'd on to produce it on the ſtage.

Vap. He prevail'd on!—The Manager you mean coud'nt be prevail'd on—but what do you think of it?

New. I never read it, but I'm told it is a good play—and if perform'd Vapid, he will be proud of your aſſiſtance.

Vap. I ſpeak in time, becauſe it is material—many a dull play has been ſaved by a good Epilogue.

New. True, but I had almoſt forgot—why Vapid, the lady in the grove will enlarge your knowledge amazingly.

Enn. I've an idea—ſhe's the pattern of perfection.

New.

Nev. The paragon of beauty! Ah Vapid! I wou'd give worlds for the coldeſt expreſſion in this letter.

Vap. That letter!—What do you mean by that letter?

Nev. And you really pretend not to know the young lady Waitfort!

Vap. No,—I havn't ſpoke to a woman ſince I came to Bath, except a ſweet girl I danced with at the Ball; and who ſhe is by the Lord I don't know.

Nev. Well but Vapid—young lady Waitfort, ſhe loves you to diſtraction!

Vap. As I hope for fame—I never heard her name before.

Nev. Then ſhe has heard your's, and admires your genius—however read the letter and be ſatisfied ſhe loves you.

Vap. (Reads) " Your arrival at Bath—Duty I owe the virtuous part of mankind long beheld your merit—long wiſhed to reward—at home at ſix this evening—your's—A Waitfort-grove"--Yes, yes, 'tis plain enough now—ſhe admires my talents—it isn't the firſt time Neville, this has happen'd—Sweet fond creature!—I'll go and prepare myſelf directly.

Nev. Ay, do Vapid,—She'll be all on fire to ſee you.

Vap. All on fire! I ſuppoſe ſo, ſo ſhall I, and then there will be a general blow up—write a play Neville, write a play you dog—you ſee the effect of the muſes and graces when they unite—you ſee Neville, you ſee—but hold, hold! how the devil came you by this letter?

Nev. That's true enough. (*Aſide.*) I'll tell you, I was at her party laſt night, and on coming out of the room ſhe ſlipt it into my hand deſired me to direct it and give it you—ſhe has often ſpoke to me in your favour, and I did you all the good I could—however to be ſure it's no miſtake, aſk the ſervant who admits you, if the name at the bottom, is not her own hand writing.

Vap. Oh no! it's no miſtake, there's no doubt of the matter—write a play Neville, write a play, then you'll learn like me to excite the paſſions—but I muſt go to her directly ſo adieu. [*Exit.*

Exit.

Enn. I've an idea if we've common fortune this will do every thing.

Nev. No, lady Waitfort's arts are numberleſs—ſhe is ſo perfect a hypocrite, that I even doubt her confeſſing her real ſentiments, to her minion Willoughby; and when ſhe does a bad action, ſhe ever pretends 'tis from a good motive. (*Re-enter Vapid.*)

Vap. 'Gad, I forgot—you'll recollect the Epilogue Neville!

Nev. Yes, yes, I'll write to my couſin to-day.

Vap. But not a word of the love affair to him—any where elſe indeed it might do one a ſervice—but never tell an intrigue to a dramatic Author.

Enn. In fact—why not Sir?

Vap. Becauſe it may furniſh out a ſcene for a Comedy, I do it myſelf indeed, I think the beſt part of our intrigue is the hopes of incident or ſtage effect—however I can't ſtay.

Nev. Nay, we'll walk with you—I'm in purſuit of my brother—you of your miſtreſs.

Vap. Ay Neville, there it is—now do take my advice and write a play—if any accidents happen, remember it is better to have written a damn'd play than no play at all—it ſnatches a man from obſcurity, and being particular (as this world goes) is a very great thing.

Nev. But I confeſs I have no deſire to get into print.

Vap. Get into print! pſha!—that has nothing to do with it—every body gets into print now—kings and quacks—peers and poets—biſhops and boxers—taylors and trading juſtices—one can't go lower you know—all get into print!—but we ſoar a little higher—we have privileges peculiar to ourſelves—Now Sir, I—for my part can talk as I pleaſe—ſay what I will, it is ſure to excite mirth, for ſuppoſing you don't laugh at my wit, damme I laugh myſelf Neville, and that makes every body elſe do the ſame—ſo allons!

Enn. I've an idea—no bad mode of routing the enemy. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE—A *Chamber in Lady Waitfort's Houſe*

Enter VAPID *and* SERVANT.

SERVANT.

SIR, my lady will wait on you immediately.

Vap. Hark'ye Sir, is this young lady of yours handſome!

Serv. Sir!

Vap. Is your young lady Sir very handſome?

Serv. Yes Sir, my young miſtreſs is thought a perfect beauty.

Vap. Oh charming!—what age do you reckon her!

Serv. About twenty Sir.

Vap. That's the right intereſting age!—and fond of the Drama I ſuppoſe?

Serv. Sir?

Vap. Very fond of plays I preſume!

Serv. Yes Sir, very fond of plays or any thing relating to them.

Vap. Delightful!—now am I the happieſt dog alive! Yes, yes, Vapid, let the town damn your plays, the women will never deſert you. (*Seats himſelf on a Chair.*) You needn't ſtay Sir. (*Exit Serv.*) That's a good ſign that fellow is'nt uſed to this kind of buſineſs—ſo much the better—practice is the deſtruction of love—yes, now I ſhall indulge a beautiful woman,—gratify myſelf, and perhaps get the laſt ſcene for my unfiniſhed Comedy—lucky dog!

Enter

Enter LADY WAITFORT.

Lady W. Sir your moſt obedient.

Vap. Ma'm (*bowing.*)

Lady W. Pray keep your ſeat Sir—I beg I mayn't diſturb you.

Vap. By no means Ma'am—give me leave (*hands a Chair, they both ſit*) who the devil have we got here. (*aſide.*)

Lady W. I'm told Sir, you have buſineſs for lady Waitfort.

Vap. Yes Ma'am, but I could wait whole hours for ſo beautiful a woman!

Lady W. Oh Sir!

Vap. Yes Ma'am, I am no ſtranger to her charms! ſweet young creature!

Lady W. Nay! dear Sir not ſo *very* young.

Vap. Your pardon Ma'am, and her youth enhances her other merits—but oh! ſhe has one charm that ſurpaſſes all!

Lady W. Has ſhe Sir, pray what may it be?

Vap. Her paſſion for the ſtage Ma'am!

Lady W. Sir!

Vap. Yes, her paſſion for the ſtage that in my mind, makes her the firſt of her ſex.

Lady W. Lord Sir! ſhe has no paſſion for the ſtage.

Vap. Yes, yes ſhe has!

Lady W. But I proteſt ſhe has not.

Vap. But I declare and affirm it as a fact, ſhe has a ſtrong paſſion for the ſtage, and a violent attachment for every body belonging to it.

Lady W. Sir, I don't underſtand you—explain.

Vap. Hark'ye we are alone—promiſe it ſhall go no further, and I'll let you into a ſecret—I know.

Lady W. Well Sir—what do you know?

Vap. I know a certain dramatic author with whom ſhe intrigues—he had a letter from her this morning.

Lady W. What!

Vap. Yes, an aſſignation—don't be alarm'd—the man may be depended on—it is ſafe—very ſafe—long in the habit of intrigue—a good perſon too—a very good perſon.

Lady W. Amazement!

Vap. (*Whiſpering her*) Hark'ye, he means to *make her happy* in leſs than half an hour.

Lady W. (*Riſing*) Sir, do you know who you are talking to? do you know who I am?

Vap. No—how the devil ſhould I!

Lady W. Then know, I am lady Waitfort!

Vap. You lady Waitfort?

Lady W. Yes Sir, and the only lady Waitfort.

Vap. Mercy on me!—here's incident!

Lady W. Yes, and I am convinc'd, you were ſent here by that traytor Neville—Speak, is he not your friend?

Vap. Yes, Ma'am, I know Mr. Neville—here's equivoque!

Lady W. This is ſome trick, ſome ſtratagem of his—he gave you the letter to perplex and embarraſs me.

Vap. Gave the letter! 'Gad that's great—pray Ma'am, give me leave to aſk you one queſtion—did you write to Mr. Neville?

Lady W. Yes, Sir, to confeſs the truth I did—but from motives.

Vap. Stop, my dear Ma'am ſtop—I have it—now let me be clear---firſt you ſend him a letter; is it not ſo? Yes,---then he gives it to me--- very well: then I come (ſuppoſing you only twenty) mighty well! then you turn out to be ninety---charming! then comes the embarraſſment; then the ecclairciſſement! Oh glorious! give me your hand you have atoned for every thing! (*embraces her with rapture.*)

Lady W. Oh! I owe all this to that villain Neville—I am not revengeful, but 'tis a weakneſs to endure ſuch repeated provocation, and I'm convinced that the mind, that too frequently forgives bad actions, will at laſt forget good ones.

Vap. Bravo! bravo! it is the very beſt ſentiment I ever heard—I'll take it down and blend it with the incident, aud you ſhall be gratified one day or other with ſeeing the whole on the ſtage—(*takes out his common-place book and writes*) "The mind that too frequently forgives bad actions, will at laſt forget good ones."

Lady W.

Lady W. This madman's folly, is not to be born—If my Lord too ſhou'd diſcover him here, the conſequences might be dreadful, and the ſcheme of Ennui's play all undone—Sir, I deſire you'll quit my houſe immediately—Oh! I'll be reveng'd I'm determin'd.

(*Exit.*)

Vapid. There's an exit—very well! I've got incident however—'faith I've noble talents—to extract gold from lead has been the toil of numberleſs philoſophers: but I extract it from a baſer metal, human frailty—Oh its a great thing to be a dramatic genius! a very great thing indeed? (*As he is going off Lord Scratch enters.*)

Vap. Sir, your moſt obedient!

Lord S. Sir, your moſt devoted!

Vap. Very warm Tragedy weather Sir—but for my part I hate ſummer, and I'll tell you why---the Theatres are then ſhut up Sir, and when I paſs by their doors in an evening it makes me melancholy---I look upon them as the tombs of departed friends that were wont to inſtruct and delight me---I don't know how you feel---perhaps you are not in my way.

Lord S. Sir!

Vap. Perhaps you don't write for the ſtage---If you do there is a capital character in this houſe for a Farce!

Lord S. Why what is all this? Who are you?

Vap. Whom am I!—here's a queſtion? In theſe times who can tell who he is? for ought I know, I may be great uncle to yourſelf, or firſt couſin to lady Waitfort—to the very woman I was about to---but no matter, ſince you're ſo very inquiſitive, do you know who you are?

Lord S. Who am I---why I'm Lord Scratch!

Vap. A Peer! contemptible! when I aſk a man who he is, do you think I want to know what are his titles and ſuch ſtuff—no, Old Scratch, I want to know what he has written, when he had the curtain up, and whether he's a true ſon of the Drama—hark'ye don't make yourſelf uneaſy on my account--in my next Pantomime perhaps I'll let you know who I am Old Scratch!

Lord S.

Lord S. Aſtoniſhing! can this be lady Waitfort's Houſe?—" Very warm tragedy weather Sir, in my next pantomime let you know who I am"—'gad I'll go and inveſtigate the matter immediately, and if ſhe has wrong'd me, by the blood of the Scratches, I'll bring the whole buſineſs before Parliament, make a ſpeech ten hours long, reduce the price of opium, and ſet the nation in a tumult. [*Exit.*

SCENE—*Library at Lady Waitfort's.*

Enter VAPID.

Vapid. Either this houſe is a labyrinth, or I in reflecting on my incident have forgot myſelf; for ſo it is, I can't find my way out—Eh! who have we here?—by the ſixtieth night my little partner!

Enter MARIANNE.

Mar. The poet I danced with!—he little thinks how much I've thought of him ſince? Sir! (*curtſeying*)

Vap. Ma'am (*bowing.*)

Mar. I hope Sir, you caught no cold the other night.

Vap. No, Ma'am, I was much nearer a fever than a cold---pray Ma'am what is your ſtudy?

Mar. I have been reading " *All* for *Love*"---pray Sir do you know any thing about plays?

Vap. Know any thing about plays! there's a queſtion.

Mar. I know ſo much about them that I once acted at a private Theatre.

Vap. Then you acted for your own amuſement and nobody's elſe: what was the play?

Mar. I can't tell.

Vap. Can't tell!

Mar. No—nobody knew---it's a way they have.

Vap. Then they act no play of mine---ſo, then with all this partiality for the ſtage---perhaps you wou'd be content with a dramatiſt for life? particularly if his morals were fine.

Mar.

Mar. Lord! I don't care about fine morals, I'de rather my huſband had fine teeth---and I'm told moſt women of faſhion are of the ſame opinion.

Vapid. To be ſure they are—but cou'd you really conſent to run away with a poet?

Mar. 'Faith with all my heart—they never have any money you know, and as I have none, our diſtreſs wou'd be compleat, and if we had any luck our adventures wou'd become public, and then we ſhou'd get into a Novel at laſt.

Vap. Into a priſon more probably—if ſhe goes on in this way, I muſt dramatize her firſt, and run away with her afterwards (*aſide*) come are you ready?

Lady W. (*without.*) Tell my lord I'll wait in the Library.

Mar. Oh Lord! my aunt, what's to be done!

Vap. What's to be done! why?

Mar. She muſtn't find you here—ſhe'll be the death of me ſhe's ſo violent.

Vap. Well, I'm not afraid of her—ſhe's no critic.

Mar. No, but if you've any pity for me—here hide yourſelf for a moment behind this ſopha and I'll get her out of the room directly.

Vap. Behind this ſopha! here's a new ſituation! (*gets behind the Sopha, Marianne ſits on it takes out her work-bag and ſings.*)

Enter LADY WAITFORT.

Mar. Tol de roll, &c.

Lady W. Marianne, how came you here? I deſire you'll leave the room directly!

Mar. Leave the room aunt? (*Looks towards the Sopha.*

Lady W. Yes, leave the room immediately—what are you looking at?

Mar. Nothing aunt, nothing—Lord, lord! what will become of poor Mr. Poet. [*Exit.*

Lady W. So, here's my Lord—now to mention Ennui's play, and if it does but prejudice him againſt him, Willoughby marries Louiſa, and Neville is in my own power.

Entir LORD SCRATCH.

Lord S. That curſt pantomime ruffian—nobody knows any thing about him—perhaps my lady has got a ſudden touch of the Dramatic Maniac, and prefers him—here ſhe is, now if ſhe ſhou'd talk about the ſtage.

Lady W. Pray be ſeated my lord---I want to aſk you a favour.

Lord S. Aſk me a favour! is it poſſible my lady?

Lady W. Yes, for our friend Ennui---what do you think he has done?

Lord S. What!

Lady W. Turn'd author—he has written a comedy.

Lord S. A comedy! She has it! (*Aſide.*)

Lady W. Yes, 'tis very true, and it has been approved of by men of the firſt dramatic fame!

Lord S. Dramatic fame! She has it, damn me but ſhe has it (*aſide.*)

Lady W. Nay, if you neeed further proof my Lord, it has been approv'd by the manager of one of the theatres, and the curtain is to be drawn up next winter,

Lord S. The curtain drawn up! Look ye ma'am, I care no more for the manager or his theatre or his prompter—(*Vapid raiſes his head from behind the Sopha then pops it down.*)

Lady W. Now my Lord, the favour I have to aſk of you is this. Promiſe me to peruſe the play, make alterations and write the Epilogue.

Lord S. Write the Epilogue! Fire and fore-fathers!

Lady W. Ay, or the Prologue!

Lord S. The Prologue! Blood and gunpowder!

(*Vapid jumps up from behind the ſopha and ſmacks Lord Scratch on the back.*)

Vap. Prologue, or Epilogue! I am the man—I'll write you both.

Lord S. There he is again!

Lady W. Oh I ſhall faint with vexation, my Lord I beg you'll miſinterpret nothing—every thing ſhall be explain'd to you. Marianne! (*calling*).

Lord S. Here's the curtain up with a vengeance.

Enter

Enter MARIANNE.

Lady W. Anſwer me directly, how came that gentleman in this apartment? I know it is ſome trick of yours.

Vap. (*coming down the ſtage.*) To be ſure never was any thing ſo fortunate! Upon my ſoul I beg your pardon; but curſe me if I can help laughing to think how lucky it was for you both I happened to be behind the ſopha, ha! ha! ha!

Mar. (*As if taking the hint.*) Faith no more can I—To be ſure it was the luckieſt thing in the world ha! ha! ha! (*here they both laugh and point to Lord Scratch and Lady Waitfort, who look amaz'd*)

Lady W. Sir, I inſiſt you'll lay aſide this levity, and inſtantly explain how you came into this houſe!

Vap. Sir—Ha! ha! ha

Lord S. Ay, Sir—explain—and diſpatch—I intreat you diſpatch—I have ſo much to ſay——

Vap. Never fear Old Lady—I'll take care of you, (*in a low tone of voice.*)

Lady W. None of your whiſpering—ſpeak out Sir!

Vap. With all my heart—then I came here Sir, by her Ladyſhip's own appointment.

Lady W. My own appointment! I ſhall run wild!

Vap. To be ſure—you have hardly forgot your own hand writing—(*feeling for the letter.*)

Lord S. Her own hand writing! Get on Sir—I beſeech you get on.

Vap. Why look'ye Old Scratch—you ſeem to be an admirer of this Lady's—now I think it my duty as a moral Dramatiſt—mark me Sir, a moral Dramatiſt, to expoſe hypocriſy—therefore Sir, there is the letter, read it and be convinced of your error.

Lord S. Very well! Have you done Sir? have you done? conſider I am a Peer of the Realm, and ſhall die if I don't talk.

Vap. And now Sir, I muſt beg a favour of you, (*gets cloſe to him*)—keep the whole a ſecret, for if it gets hacknied it loſes all its force.

Lord S. Granted! granted—I'll grant you any thing ſo you will but get on.

Vap.

Vap. Between ourſelves—I mean—

Lord S. No pauſes Sir.

Vap. To bring it all on the ſtage! huſh! ſay nothing—it will have a capital effect, and brother Bards will wonder where I ſtole it—Your ſituation will be wonderful—you havn't an idea how ridiculous you'll look—you'll laugh very much at yourſelf I aſſure you, your part ſhall be done well! little Cherry ſhall do you!

Lord S. What is all this?—well—now I will ſpeak—I'll wait no longer.

Vap. Yes, yes, I'll take care of you—Falſtaff in the Buck baſket will be nothing to it—he was only the dupe of another man's wife, but you'll be the dupe of your own you know—" think of that Maſter Brook, think of that,"—well I'll write you the Prologue and Epilogue; but you need not ſend me the Comedy, we never connect either with the play now—your friend may be damn'd you know and don't chuſe to ſuffer for his ſins—I like to live and fight another day—Marianne farewell my dear—Old Lady *adieu*—I'll do your buſineſs depend on't. [*Exit.*

Lord S. He's gone without hearing me! then there's an end of every thing, for now here I ſtand—once a Barriſter—ſince a Country Gentleman, and now a Peer, and tho' I've made twenty attempts to ſpeak, I can't be heard a ſyllable—Mercy, mercy! What will the world come to! a Peer and not to be heard!

Lady W. My Lord, aſſured of my own innocence, I have no doubt of juſtifying myſelf, and even by means of that letter encreaſing your affection—it was written to another perſon—your ungrateful nephew.

Lord S. My nephew!

Lady W. Yes Sir, I cou'd not perceive him loſing the eſteem of his friends without having the deſire to reclaim him—indeed I knew no better mode of fulfilling my project, than by perſonally warning him of his ſituation—for this purpoſe I wrote that letter, and I never thought it wou'd be thus miſus'd—if there is any improper warmth in the expreſſions it only proceeds

ceeds from my anxiety of enſuring an interview—I hope Sir, you are ſatisfied!

Lord S. Why I believe you my Lady, and I ſhou'd be perfectly ſatisfied if I cou'd forget your paſſion for the ſtage, and that madman behind the ſopha.

Lady W. As to that Sir, this young lady can inform you—I deſired him to leave the houſe an hour ago.

Mar. (*Aſide*). I'm afraid, my only way is to confeſs all—my Lord, if I confeſs the truth, I hope you'll prevail on my aunt to forgive me.

Lord S. Tell what you know, and I'll anſwer for your forgiveneſs.

Mar. Why Sir, I found the gentleman alone and not having had a tete-a-tete a long time, I preſs'd him to ſtay, and on hearing your voice, I put him behind the ſopha—that you might not think any thing had happened—and indeed Sir, nothing did happen—— upon my word he's as quite an inoffenſive gentleman as yourſelf.

Lord S. My fears are over! Oh you finiſhed compoſition! come to my arms, (*embraces*) and when I ſuſpect you again (*coughs much*) this curſt cough takes one ſo ſuddenly!——

Enter ENNUI.

Enn. I've an idea Floreville is arrived, in fact I juſt now ſpoke to him.

Lord S. Floreville arriv'd! Come my Lady let's go and ſee what his travels have done for him—hark'ye Ennui—prepare for your interview with Louiſa, and remember you make a mandarine member—come my Lady—nay, never irritate your feelings.

Lady W. Alas my Lord! it is the misfortune of virtue to be too feeling for the vices and errors of others—but I attend you. [*Exeunt.*

Mar. So poor Mr. Neville is to loſe Miſs Courtney—her preſent quarrel with him is ſo violent, that ſhe may marry this ideot merely in revenge. If I cou'd dupe him now and enſure her contempt. I'll try—Mr. Ennui, have you ſeen your intended wife yet?

Enn. No!

Mar.

Mar. So I thought---why you'll never pleaſe her while you remain as you are----you muſt alter your manners. She's all life—all ſpirits! and loves a man the very oppoſite to you.

Enn. I've an idea, I'm very ſorry—in fact how can I pleaſe her?

Mar. There's the difficulty let me ſee—the ſort of man ſhe likes—you know Sir Harry Huſtle—a man all activity and confidence—who does every thing from faſhion and glories in confeſſing it.

Enn. Sir Harry Huſtle! In fact he's a modern blood of faſhion.

Mar. I know that's the reaſon ſhe likes him, and you muſt become the ſame if you wiſh to win her affections----a new dreſs, bold looks, a few oaths and much ſwaggering effects the buſineſs (*Ennui puts himſelf in attitudes*) ay, that's right, you are the very man already!

Enn. I'm a lad of faſhion! hah---damn me! I've an idea, I ſhall fall aſleep in the midſt of it.

Mar. No, no, go about it directly—See Sir Harry Huſtle, and ſtudy your converſation before-hand—but remember Louiſa is ſo fond of faſhion, that you can't boaſt too much of its vices and abſurdities.

Enn. If virtue was the faſhion, I ſhou'd be virtuous! I ſhou'd, damn me!

Mar. Ay, that's the very thing---well good b'ye Mr. Ennui---ſucceſs attend you----mind you talk enough.

Enn. Talk! I'll talk 'till I fall aſleep! I will damn me! [*Exeunt Ennui ſwaggering, Marianne laughing.*

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE—*A Chamber in Lady Waitfort's Houſe.—Louiſa diſcovered reading.*

LOUISA.

HEIGHO! theſe poets are wonderfully tireſome ----always on the ſame theme----nothing but love---- I'm weary of it. (*Lays down the book and riſes*). Ungenerous Neville! How cou'd he uſe me ſo cruelly? to attempt to gain my affections and then addreſs another. Lady Waitfort has convinc'd me of the fact, I can never forgive him, and yet I fear I love him ſtill. Well, I'll even go and examine my heart and determine whether I love him or not. (*As ſhe is going out Neville enters.*)

Louiſa. Mr. Neville----I thought Sir, I had deſired we might never meet again.

Nev. 'Tis true Madam, and I meant to obey your commands hard as they were, implicitly obey them—but I came here to welcome my brother, and not to intrude on the happineſs of her I am doom'd to avoid.

Louiſa. I'll conceal my embarraſſment, I am determin'd. (*Aſide.*) If I remember Sir, truth was ever among the foremoſt of your virtues.

Nev. Yes, and I am confident you have no reaſon to doubt it---tho' you have cauſe to cenſure my preſumption, you have none to ſuſpect my fidelity.

Louiſa. Oh no! I don't ſuſpect your fidelity in the leaſt, but when people are faithful to more than one, you know, Mr. Neville.——

Nev. I don't underſtand you Ma'am,

Louiſa,

Louiſa. 'Tis no wonder Mr. Neville—you may ſpare yourſelf any trouble in attempting to juſtify your conduct—I'm perfectly ſatisfied Sir, I'll aſſure you! (*Going.*)

Nev. Oh! do not leave me in this anxious ſtate, perhaps this is the laſt time we ſhall ever meet; and to part thus wou'd imbitter every future moment of my life. I indeed have no hopes that concern not your happineſs, no wiſhes that relate not to your eſteem.

Louiſa. Sir, I will freely confeſs to you, had you ſhewn the leaſt perſeverance in your affection, or ſincerity in your behaviour, I cou'd have heard your addreſſes with pleaſure—but to liſten to them now Mr. Neville, wou'd be to approve a conduct my honour prompts me to reſent, and my pride to deſpiſe.

Nev. Then I am loſt indeed! tis to the perfidious lady Waitfort I owe all this---(*Lady Waitfort enters behind unſeen by Neville*)---my preſent miſery, my future pain are all the product of her jealous rage! ſhe is ſo vile an hypocrite that (*Enter Lady Waitfort.*)

Lady W. Who is an hypocrite Sir!

Nev. Madam!

Lady W. Who is a hypocrite Sir, anſwer me!

Nev. Aſk your own heart! that can beſt inform you.

Lady W. Tell me Mr. Neville, what have I done that you dare inſult me thus?

Nev. What have you done? look on that lady madam, there all my hopes and wiſhes were combin'd! there was the very ſummit of my bliſs! I thought I had attained it; but in the moment of my happineſs you came, cruſh'd every hope and baffled all my joys!

Lady W. Upon my word Sir, very romantic---but I thank heaven I look for approbation in a better opinion than that of Mr. Neville's.

Nev. 'Tis well you do madam, for were I your judge, your puniſhment ſhou'd be exemplary---but I'll waſte words no more---I only hope (*to Louiſa*) you madam are ſatisfied that one of my errors may at leaſt be forgiven, and this laſt ſuſpicion for ever blotted from your memory.

take care my lord never ſhall.

Nev. No---I do not hope for forgiveneſs---I have heard her determination, and cruel as it is, to that I muſt reſign---ſhe may be aſſured I never will intrude where I know I offend.

Louiſa. Do you then leave us Mr. Neville?

Nev. Yes, madam, and for ever!---may you be as bleſt in the gratification of your hopes as I have been wretched in the diſappointment of mine. [*Exit.*

Lady W. Tyrant! I wiſh he had ſtay'd to hear reaſon---I hope he is not ſerious in leaving us!

Louiſa. You hope!---why does it concern you?

Lady W. Oh! no further than from the general love I bear mankind---you forget my feelings on theſe occaſions Louiſa!

Louiſa. Yes, indeed I have too much reaſon to attend my own!---You'll excuſe me---I have particular buſineſs, but will return immediately. [*Exit.*

Lady W. Oh, the cauſe of her confuſion is evident ---ſhe loves him ſtill---but they ſhall never meet again ---I have already ſent a letter to Willoughby which imparts a ſcheme I have long cheriſhed, my lord in his anger about my ſtage maniac, has forgot Ennui's play, ſo that there may be no bars to Willoughby's happineſs, I am determined Louiſa ſhall be his this very night.

Enter LORD SCRATCH.

Lord S. Here's a ſpectacle for a Peer! Florivelle is below, and is return'd from his travels a finiſhed coxcomb, I'll not give him a farthing.

Lady W. I hope not my lord, perhaps you may be miſtaken.

Lord S. Miſtaken! No, he has travell'd not to ſee, but to ſay he had ſeen.

Enter MARIANNE (*with a French watch and chain*)

Mar. Oh uncle in-law! look here---I never ſaw any ſo elegant in all my life. (*Shewing chain.*)

Lord S. Whoſe preſent is this?

Mar. Whoſe! why the ſweet gentleman juſt arrived from Italy—Lord! he's a dear man—he has

promis'd to do every thing for me---to get me a fortune---to get me a huſband---to get me---a——

Lord S. Huſh!---you don't know what you are talking about.

Mar. Yes, but I do tho', he has told me every thing---Lord! I have heard ſuch things!---come here ---nearer--get my aunt out of the room and I'll tell you ſtories that ſhall make your old heart bound again! ---huſh do it quietly---I will upon my honor---what an old fool it is. (*Aſide.*)

Lady W. You muſtn't liſten to Mr. Florivelle, for travellers may perſuade you into any thing, and many a woman has been ruin'd in one country, by being told it is the faſhion in another.

Lord S. Here he comes---I ſee as plain as my peerage I ſhan't keep my temper.

Lady W. I ſuppoſe my Lord he has ſpent great part of his time in France, where he has been the dupe of knaves of every nation.

Enter FLORIVELLE.

Flor. Your pardon madam, you wrong the French ---they never ſuffer any one to dupe a traveller but themſelves---ladies a thouſand pardons for not waiting on you before; but this is the firſt vacant moment I have had ſince my arrival at Bath.

Mar. Your coming at all is taken as a very great compliment I'll aſſure you.

Lady W. (*To Marianne who exits.*)---Leave the room immediately---no reply---I will be obey'd---Mr. Florivelle, we are very happy to ſee you.

Flor. Ma'am you do me honor---my lord where's Harry! I thought to have found him here---what, he didn't chuſe to ſtay---ſo much the better---it ſhews he's not a man of ceremony---we do the ſame in Italy ---but hark'yee.

Lord S. My gorge is riſing! I ſhall certainly do him a miſchief.

Flor. (*Spying at lady W.*) Rather experienc'd or ſo ---a little antique hah!---however the ſame motive

Lady W. Sir, from that lady's forgiveneſs you have nothing to expect---If ſhe conſents to pardon you, I'll that

that makes her a good aunt to me, will make her a good wife to you---you underſtand me?

Lord S. Damn me if I do!

Flor. Well, well, no matter---come come, I want to hear every thing, to know what remarkable occurrences have happen'd ſince I left England---pray lady Waitfort inform me---do let me know every little circumſtance.

Lady W. Rather Sir, we ſhould aſk of you, what happen'd in your travels?

Flor. Oh nothing ſo ſhocking---no man can be the herald of his own praiſe!

Lady W. Yes, Sir, but I wiſh to know how you like the chapel of Loretto, the Venus de Medicis of Florence, the Vatican at Rome, and all the numberleſs curioſities peculiar to the countries you have travell'd.

Lord S. Look'ye---I'll anſwer for it, he knows nothing of the gentlemen you mention---do you my ſweet pretty---oh you damn'd puppy!

Flor. But why ſwear my Lord?

Lord S. Swear my Lord! zounds! its my prerogative and by---tell me how you ſpent your time Sir.

Flor. Why in contemplating living angels, not dead antiquities! in baſking in the rays of beauty! not mouldering in the duſt of *anceſtry*! In mirth, feſtivity and pleaſure! not ſtudy pedantry, and retirement ---oh I have lived Sir! lived for myſelf, not an ungrateful world, who ſhou'd I die a martyr for their cauſe, wou'd only laugh and wonder at my folly.

Lady W. You ſeem to know the world Mr. Florivelle.

Flor. No madam, I know little of mankind, and leſs of myſelf---I have no pilot but my pleaſures! no miſtreſs but my paſſions? and I don't believe if it were to ſave my life I cou'd reaſon conſequently for a minute together.

Lord S. Granted --you have ſeen every thing worth ſeeing, yet know nothing worth knowing, and after all you have juſt knowledge enough to prove yourſelf a fool on every ſubject.

Flor. Vaſtly well my lord, upon my word you improve with your title; but I am perfectly ſatisfied believe me; for what I don't know, I take for granted is not worth knowing—therefore we'll call another topic, I'm in love my lord!

Lord S. In love!—with who Sir?

Flor. Can't you gueſs?

Lord S. No Sir, I cannot!

Flor. With one that will pleaſe you very much—at leaſt ought to pleaſe you—you'll be in raptures dear uncle!

Lord S. Raptures;—and you ſhall be in agonies my dear nephew!

Flor. You have known one another a long while, yet you havn't met for years—you have lov'd one another a long while, yet you quarrel'd not an hour ago, you have differ'd from one another all your lives, yet are likely to be friends as long as you live, and above all this perſon is now in this houſe.

Lord S. In this houſe! tell me who it is this moment, or by the blood of the Scratches!

Flor. One who has charms enough to ſet the world on fire! one who has fortune enough to ſet a ſtate at war Sir! one who has talents, health and proſperity, and yet not half what the party deſerves—can you tell now Sir?

Lord S. No, Sir, and if you don't tell this inſtant.

Flor. Then I'll tell you. It's myſelf Sir—my own charming ſelf!—I've ſearch'd the world over, and don't find any thing I like half ſo well. (*Walks up the ſtage.*)

Lord S. I won't diſgrace myſelf———I won't lower the dignity of peerage by chaſtiſing a commoner, elſe you prince of butterflies—come my lady—look'ye Sir—I intend to be handed down to poſterity; and while you are being lampoon'd in ballads and news-papers, I mean to cut a figure in the hiſtory of England—ſo come along my lady—in the hiſtory of England! you damn'd coxcomb. [*Exeunt.*

Flor. If the face be a picture of the mind, that intended aunt of mine is a great hypocrite and the ſtory I heard of the poet proves it—but now for a frolic—'gad its very ſtrange I cou'd never reform

and

and become a ſerious thinking being? but what's the uſe of thinking?

" Reaſon ſtays till we call, then not oft is near,
" But honeſt inſtinct comes a volunteer."

SCENE—*A Chamber in Lady Waitfort's.*

Enter WILLOUGHBY *and* SERVANT.

Will. Tell your miſtreſs I ſhall be punctual to the appointment. (*Exit Servant.*) So thanks to fortune, lady Waitfort has at laſt conſented to my entreaties, and this night makes Louiſa mine for ever!—now to read the letter once more—(*Reads*) " Louiſa accom-
" panies me to night to Lady Walton's, which you
" know is at the extremity of the town—on ſome pre-
" tence or other, I'll tell her I have order'd the ſervant at
" the back gate, which adjoins the paddock—there
" I'll leave her, and if you have a chaiſe waiting
" near the ſpot you may conduct her where you
" pleaſe, you know my feelings on this occaſion, but
" it is for her good only I'll aſſure you—ſhe don't de-
" ſerve it Mr. Willoughby;—Indeed ſhe don't deſerve
" it. A. Waitfort!"

So! this is beyond my hopes—Ha! my lord! and Louiſa with him! come to receive Ennui who to my aſtoniſhment I met juſt now in a new dreſs, ſwearing and capering, and boaſting of the vices of faſhion, but no matter—I muſt to the rendezvous immediately. Now Louiſa, tremble at my vengeance. [*Exit.*

Enter LORD SCRATCH *and* LOUISA.

Lord S. Yes, yes, Ennui will be here in an inſtant, but he's ſo reſerv'd, and ſo mild.

Louiſa. So I underſtand Sir, and ſo very ſilent that he won't talk ſo much in a year as I intend in an hour.

Lord S. I know that's the reaſon I bring him into Parliament—he'll never ſpeak—only ſay aye, or no, and be up ſtairs to Beefſtakes in an inſtant. (*Knock.*) Here he is!—now encourage him Louiſa, don't mind his diffidence.

Louiſa. No Sir,—I'll do all in my power to make him talk.

Lord S. That's well!—I'll leave you together—I don't interrupt you. (*Stamping without*) odſo! I muſt getout of the way encourage him Louiſa! I beſeech you encourage him. *Exit.*)

Ennui. (*without*) ſtand by no ceremony damn me.

Louiſa. Heavens! is this diffidence?

Enter ENNUI *and* SERVANT.

Enn. Get down ſtairs you dog—get down—— (*Exit Servant.*)—Here I am ma'am—eaſe is every thing—I'll ſeat myſelf—now for buſineſs!—Yaw! yaw! (*Yawns aſide.*)

Louiſa. Sir!

Enn. In one word ma'am, I'll tell you my character—I'm a lad of faſhion dam'me, I love gaming, I hate thinking—I like railing—I deſpiſe reading—I patronize boxing—I deteſt reaſoning—I pay debts of honor—not honorable debts.—In ſhort I'll kick your ſervant—cheat your family, and fight your guardian—and ſo if you like me take—heh, damn me!—I'm tired already!—yaw—yaw!—yawns.

Louiſa. Aſtoniſhing! Mr. Ennui!

Enn. Ma'am, yaw—yaw—

Louiſa. Mr. Ennui! Can you be in your ſenſes?

Enn. In fact I don't comprehend (*forgetting himſelf*) Oh! ay——(ſenſes) *recollecting himſelf*,—— a lad of faſhion in his ſenſes! that's a very good joke—if one of us had any ſenſe, the reſt would ſhut him up in a cabinet of curioſities, or ſhew him for a wonderful animal! they wou'd damn me! I can't ſupport it—yaw—yaw.

Louiſa. So you glory in your ignorance——

Enn. Ma'am, yaw——yaw!——

Louiſa. So you glory in your ignorance—in your vices.——

Enn. I've an idea—I can't underſtand (*forgetting himſelf*) vices! Oh—ay damn me to be ſure! (*recollecting himſelf.*) You muſt be wicked or you can't be

viſited

viſited—ſingularity is every thing—notoriety—every man muſt get a character—and I'll tell you how I firſt got mine. I pretended to intrigue with my friend's wife—paragraph'd myſelf in the newſpapers—got caracatured in the print ſhops—made the ſtory believed, was abuſed by every body—noticed for my gallantry by every body, and at length viſited by every body—I was damn me! (*I'm curſt ſleepy*) yaw! yaw.

Louiſa. Incredible! But if ſingularity be your ſyſtem, perhaps being virtuous wou'd make you as particular as any thing.

Enn. Vaſtly well! Egad your'e like me—a wit and don't know it (*takes out his watch*) how goes the enemy? more than half the day over! tol de rol lol, (*ſinging*) I am as happy as if I was at a fire or a general riot——Come to my arms thou angel! thou——(*as he is going to embrace her, enter* LORD SCRATCH *who catches him.*) Ah Scratch! my friend Scratch! ſit down my old boy, ſit down! we've ſettled every thing (*forces him into a chair.*)

Lord S. Why! what is all this?

Enn. She's to intrigue—and you and I are to go halves in the damages—ſome rich old Nabob—we'll draw him into crim con.! bring an action directly—and get a 10,000l. verdict at leaſt, heh! damn me!

Lord S. Why he's mad. That dramatic Maniac has bit him.

Enn. Get a divorce—marry another, and go halves again damn me!

Lord S. Why look'ye, you impoſtor you, didn't you come here to pay your addreſſes to this lady—and was'nt I to bring you into parliament for your quiet, ſilent diſpoſition?

Enn. (*Puſhing him out of the way.*) Hold your tongue! out of the way Scratch, out of the way! or I'll do you a miſchief damn me! Zounds! ai'nt I at the top of the beau monde! and don't I lead the faſhion? If I was to cut off my head wou'dnt half the town do the ſame, they wou'd damn me. (I get ſleepy again, yaw—yaw.

Lord S. Here now, here's a mandarine member, why he'd breed a civil war! make ten long ſpeeches

in

in a day! Cut your head off indeed! Curſe me but I wiſh it was cut off—you muſt be ſilent then—you can't talk without a head cou'd you?

Enn. Yes, in *parliament*, as well without a head as with one—do you think a man wants a head to make a long ſpeech damn me!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Her Ladyſhip is waiting Ma'am.

[*Exit Serv.*

Louiſa. Oh! I attend her, Mr. Ennui your moſt obedient!

Enn. (*Taking her hand.*) With your leave Ma'am, you ſee Scratch!

Lord S. Why Louiſa!

Enn. Keep your diſtance Scratch! contemplate your ſuperiors! look at me with the ſame awful reſpect as city beaus look at a prince—this way moſt angelico! Scratch, cut off your head—this way moſt divine angelico. [*Exit Ennui and Louiſa.*

Lord S. Here's treatment! Was ever poor peer ſo tormented—what am I to do? I'll go to Lady Waitfort, for from her alone I meet relief—find a ſilent member indeed! by my peerage and privilege, one might as ſoon find a pin in the ocean, charity in a bench of Biſhops, or wit in Weſtminſter Hall. [*Exit.*

A C T. IV.

SCENE—*Paddock near Lady Waitfort's houſe.*

Enter WILLOUGHBY.

Will. 'Tis paſt the hour Lady Waitfort appointed—Why does ſhe delay? I cannot have miſtaken the place——yonder is Lady Walton's houſe! Oh would all were paſt, and Louiſa ſafely mine! I hear a noiſe! by Heaven's 'tis ſhe, and with her all my happineſs—I'll withdraw awhile and obſerve them (*retires.*)

Enter

Enter LADY WAITFORT *and* LOUISA.

Louiſa. My dear Lady Waitfort, why do you loiter here? You cannot find your ſervant in this place, let us return to Lady Walton's.

Lady W. No, no, they muſt be here, I order'd them to wait in this very ſpot to avoid confuſion.—— What can have become of Willoughby? (*aſide.*)

Louiſa. If you have the leaſt ſenſe of fear for yourſelf, or regard for me, I beg we may return to Lady Walton's.

Lady W. No, no, I order'd William at the back gate that he might conduct us through the paddock to our carriage, you know we might have been whole hours getting thro' the crowd the other way, do be a little patient, havn't I as much reaſon to be alarm'd as yourſelf?

Louiſa. Yes, but you hav'nt the apprehenſion that I have, I don't know why, but I am terrified beyond deſcription!

Lady W. Well, well, never fear, (*looking out*) Oh, yonder's Willoughby! now for the grand deſign! (*aſide*) if you'll ſtay here a moment, I'll ſtep to the next gate and ſee if they are there——they cannot eſcape us then.

Louiſa. No, no! don't leave me! I wouldn't ſtay by myſelf for the world!

Lady W. Ridiculous! can't you protect yourſelf for an inſtant? Muſt you be all your life watched like a baby in leading ſtrings! Oh! I'm aſham'd of you, only wait a moment, leſt they paſs by in my abſence, and I'll return to you immediately.

Louiſa. Well don't ſtay!

Lady W. Stay! What have you to be frightened at? I ſhall not be out of call, beſides if there's any fear of a perſonal attack, may not I be as terrified as yourſelf. It is'nt the firſt time I'll aſſure you—but that's no matter, ſhew yourſelf a woman of ſpirit, and at leaſt emulate one of my virtues—now Willoughby the reſt is thine (*aſide.*) [*Exit Lady W.*

WIL-

WILLOUGHBY *comes forward.*

Will. Be not alarm'd Miſs Courtney!

Louiſa. Mr. Willoughby!

Will. Yes. Madam, the man you moſt avoid!

Louiſa. Tell me Sir immediately how, and by whoſe appointment you came here?

Will. By love Madam, the ſame paſſion that has prompted me to purſue you for years, now happily conducts me hither—I come to leſſen your fears not encreaſe them.

Louiſa. Then leave me Sir, I can protect myſelf!

Will. No, not 'till you have heard and pitied me—I have been long your ſuitor, and long ſcorn'd by you—you have treated me with indifference and prefer'd my inferiors—how I have deſerv'd all this yourſelf can beſt explain; but to prove all former cruelties are forgot, I here offer you my hand and with it my heart.

Louiſa. Sir, this is no time for hearing you on this ſubject, if you wiſh to oblige me, leave me.

Will. No, not 'till I am anſwer'd—years may elapſe e're I ſhall have another opportunity like the preſent, therefore no time can be ſo well as now.

Louiſa. Then, I command you to leave me, I will not be threatened into a compliance.

Will. Look'ye Miſs Courtney, I wou'd avoid taking advantage of your ſituation—nay ſtart not—but if you perſiſt in your contempt of me I know not to what extremities paſſion may hurry me, I have every motive for redreſs, and if you do not inſtantly give me your word to prefer me to that beggar Neville, I may do that my coo'er ſenſe would ſcorn!

Louiſa. Beggar Sir!

Will. Yes, and were he not beneath my reſentment, I'd tell you more——but he's too poor—too—

Louiſa. Hold Sir, did you reſemble him, I might eſteem, nay adore you; you take advantage of my ſituation; hear me Sir! tho' not a friend is near, tho' night oppoſes me, and Heaven deſerts me, yet can I ſmile upon your menaces, for my own eyes ſhall vindi-

cate

cate my wrongs, and make you tremble villain, as you are!

Will. Have a care Madam, another declaration like that, and I'll delay no longer, I'll force you to my purpoſe!

Louiſa. You dare not, on your life you dare not.

Will. Nay, then, I'm not to be terrified by threats—(*lays hold of her*) all ſtruggling is in vain, this moment gratifies my revenge! away.

Louiſa. Off—let me go, Oh help! help! (*As he is forcing her out, enters* FLORIVELLE *half drunk.*)

Flor. (*Singing part of an Italian ſong.*) Donne, donne, don—Oh this burgundy's a glorious liquor—hey day! who have we here?

Louiſa. Oh Sir, if you have any pity for an injur'd helpleſs woman, aſſiſt one who never knew diſtreſs till now.

Flor. Go on Ma'am, go on! both damned drunk I perceive.

Louiſa. Do not Sir be deaf to my intreaties, do not deſert me!

Flor. Go on Madam, go on! I love oratory in a woman!

Louiſa. Gracious Heaven! how have I deſerved this? I ſee Sir you avoid me—I ſee you're indifferent to my fate.

Flor. No Ma'am, you wrong me—but in Italy obſerve we always take theſe things cooly——now Sir (*to Willoughby*) will you explain.

Will. No Sir, I will not.

Flor. You will not.

Will. No Sir, and I warn you not to liſten to the wild ravings of a ſenſeleſs woman—it may be better for you Sir.

Flor. Why ſo, Prince Prettyman?

Will. No matter Sir, I will not be amuſed from my purpoſe.

Flor. You won't old Pluto won't you! then Ma'am obſerve, you ſhall behold my mode of fighting—I'll kill him like a gentleman, and he ſhall die without a groan—you'll be delighted Ma'am—I learnt it all in Italy

Italy—you don't ſee a man of faſhion fight once in a century! Come Beelzebub are you ready?

Will. 'Sdeath what can I do? he is drunk perhaps I may diſarm him.

Flor. Now thou original Sin! Thou Prince of Darkneſs! come out, never let her ſee thy black infernal viſage more, or by my life I'll pulveriſe you! You ſee Ma'am no bad orator either—learnt it all in Italy.

Will. Come on Sir.

Flor. Ay now old Syſippus puſh home—but do you hear, fight like a gentleman, for remember there's a lady in company. Obſerve Ma'am, obſerve! you won't ſee it again! (*They fight Floriville diſarms him.*) What vanquiſh'd Tarquin? Hah? (*parrying up and down the ſtage in triumph.*) You ſee Ma'am, you ſee—— Oh Italy's your only country! Now Madam, wou'd you have me kill him here "en allegro" or poſtpone it, that you may have the pleaſure of pinking him yourſelf "en penſeroſo"

Louiſa. Florivelle my deliverer! Generous man! No, Sir, whatever are his crimes do not kill him—his greateſt puniſhment will be to live.

Flor. There then Caitiff, take your ſword, and d'ye hear—retire—that black face of thine offends the lady—if you want another flouriſh you will ſoon find Floriville—Abſcond!

Will. Sir, you ſhall ſoon hear from me—Diſtract'on! [*Exit.*

Flor. And now my dear little angel! how can I aſſiſt you? I'm very ſorry but I cannot help it—— I'm curſt drunk and not proper company for a lady of your dignity—but I won't affront you, I mean to make myſelf agreeable, and if I do not it is the fault of this place (*pointing to his head*) and not this (*pointing to his heart.*)

Louiſa. Sir, your conduct has endear'd you to me for ever, and while I live, your generoſity and valour ſhall be engraven on my heart.

Flor. Gently, gently have a care, make no declarations—if you are in love with me, as I ſuppoſe you

are

are, keep it a ſecret, for at this moment you might raiſe a flame that wou'd conſume us both, poor creature! how fond ſhe is of me, any other time I wou'd indulge her, but not now (*looks at her, and then runs and kiſſes her hand.*) Oh you paragon! "Angels muſt paint to look as fair as you" (*goes from her again*) I'il leave you, or by Heavens! it will be all over with us.

Louiſa. No, no, don't deſert me, alas I have no way left, but to commit myſelf to your care. If I cou'd bring him to recollect me all wou'd be ſafe—Mr. Florivelle, don't you know me?

Flor. No—would to Heaven I did.

Louiſa. What, not Miſs Courtney?

Flor. What Louiſa! my brother's idol?

Louiſa. The very ſame.

Flor. Then may I die, if I don't get out of your debt before I leave you—where, where ſhall I conduct you?

Louiſa. Alas! I know not—return to Lady Waitfort's I will not, I had rather be a wanderer all my life—to Lady Walton's there is no excuſe for my returning, I know no friend in Bath, I dare intrude upon—I have ſo high an opinion Mr. Florivelle of your honour, that notwithſtanding your preſent ſituation, there is no man on earth I wou'd ſooner confide in, can you then think of any place where I may reſt in ſafety for a few hours; and then I will ſet out for my uncle's in the country.

Flor. Indeed I cannot, I am a wanderer myſelf—I have no houſe, but what this gentleman is to purchaſe me (*taking out his purſe*) You cannot partake of that.

Louiſa. Oh what will become of me?

Flor, Let me ſee—I have it—I'll take her to my brother's—ſhe'll be ſafe there and not a ſoul ſhall come near her—well Miſs Courtney, I have recollected a place where I know you'll be ſafe—a friend's houſe that will be as ſecure—nay, don't droop, in Italy never, never melancholy!

Louiſa. Oh, Mr. Florivelle! to what a hazard has Lady Waitfort expos'd me—to her perfidy I owe it all —but yonder's that wretch again, pray let us begone.

Flor. Beelzebub again? no, no—muſtn't ſtir——what an angel fly from a devil! I'll ſtay and cruſh him, Tarquin avaunt! come my beſt angel! I'll fight your battles, and if I don't ſink all your enemies, may I never ſee Italy again as long as I live.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter WILLOUGHBY.

Will. Ha! gone! I'm ſorry for it—I wou'd have ſeen them, Lady Waitfort has juſt left me and treated me like her ſlave—inſulted and derided me—but I'll have done with her for ever—I'll be her dupe no more —She is now gone to Neville's lodgings under pretence of purſuing Louiſa; but in fact to ſee him, and prevent his leaving Bath; thus I hope I ſhall make ſome reparations for the wrongs I have committed, and prove at leaſt that I have ſome virtue. [*Exit.*

SCENE——*Neville's Lodgings.*

Enter VAPID *and* PETER.

Vap. Well, here it is—where's Neville?

Peter. Not within Sir.

Vap. Yes, yes, here it is—I muſt ſee him!

Peter. Sir he's gone out.

Vap. Gone out! impoſſible!

Peter. Impoſſible! it's very true Sir.

Vap. Gone out! why I have brought him the Epilogue—the new epilogue to Mr. What's is name's comedy—the very beſt thing I ever wrote in my life—I knew it wou'd delight him.

Peter. Sir, he has been gone out above theſe two hours.

Vap.

Vap. Then he'll never forgive himſelf as long as he lives—why its all correct—all chaſte! only one half line wanting at the end to make it compleat.

Peter. Indeed Sir, its very unfortunate.

Vap. Unfortunate! I wanted to have heard him read it too, when another perſon reads it, one often hits on a thought that might have otherwiſe eſcaped, then perhaps he wou'd have hit on that curs'd half line I've ſo long been working at.

Peter. Sir, if it is not impertinent, and you'd permit me to read it—

Vap. You read it!

Peter. Yes, Sir, if you'd allow me the honour.

Vap. Eh! Why faith I wou'd have no objection —but then wou'dn't it leſſen one's dignity! no, no, Moliere uſed to read his plays to his ſervant—ſo I believe all's regular—but Sir, can you read! come then begin. (*Peter reads the Epilogue.*)

" In antient times when agonizing wars,
" And bleeding nations fill'd the world with jars,
" When murder, battle, ſudden death prevail'd
" When!——

Vap. Stop, ſtop! I have it—not a word for your life—I feel it—its coming on! the laſt line directly—quick, quick——

Peter reads,

" The tyrant totters and the ſenate nods,
" Die all, die nobly——

here's ſomething wanting Sir.

Vap. I know it, ſay nothing—I have it (*walking up and down the ſtage.*)

" The tyrant totters and the ſenate nods,
" Die all, die nobly!——

Oh damn it! damn it! damn it! that curs'd half line I ſhall never accompliſh it—all ſo chaſte—all ſo

correct—and to have it marr'd for wanting one half line! one curſt half line! vexatious! I cou'd almoſt weep for diſappointment!

Peter. Never mind it Sir, don't perplex yourſelf, put in any thing.

Vap. Put in any thing! why you damned dog! what do you mean—put in any thing, why you raſcal, 'tis the laſt line, and the Epilogue muſt end with ſomething ſtriking or it will be no trap for the galleries, no trap for applauſe after all this fine writing! Oh, 'tis too much!——

Peter. Methinks this is a ſtrange Epilogue for a Comedy. Perhaps this is my maſter Sir, no as I live 'tis Mr. Florivelle and Miſs Courtney! She muſtn't on any account be ſeen by this gentleman. (*Aſide.*)

Vap. Well, who is it?

Peter. Sir it's a friend of my maſter's who has brought a lady with him—I'm ſure you've too much gallantry to interrupt an amour, and therefore you'll be kind enough to get out of the way directly.

Vap. Get out of the way? What the devil in the middle of my compoſition?

Peter. Nay Sir, only ſtep for a moment into that cloſet, and you ſhall ſoon be releas'd—now pray Sir, be prevail'd on.

Vap. Well, let me ſee, in this cloſet! why you damn'd dog! this is a china cloſet! wou'd you ram a live author into a china cloſet?

Peter. What can I do Sir, there is no other way out but that door—do Sir, get in here, for an inſtant, and I'll ſhew them into the library—now Sir——

Vap. Well, be brief then—"Die all—die nobly!" Oh, Oh! Oh! (*Goes into the cloſet.*)

Enter FLORIVELLE *and* LOUISA.

Flor. Hey day! my old acquaintance Peter! where's my brother?

Peter. Sir, he has been out the whole evening.

Louiſa.

Louiſa. In the ſame houſe with Neville, Oh Heavens!

Flor. Well now Miſs Courtney I hope you're convinc'd of your ſafety?

Louiſa. Yes, Sir, but I wou'd it were in any other place! Lady Waitſort e're this is in purſuit of me, and if ſhe diſcovers me here, you know too well how much I have to dread.

[*Exit Peter.*

Flor. Don't be alarm'd, there's nothing ſhall moleſt you.

Louiſa. Oh, Sir! you don't know the endleſs malice of Lady Waitfort—ſhe will triumph in my miſery, and, 'till my Lord is convinc'd of her duplicity, I ſee no hopes of your brother's happineſs or my own.

Enter PETER.

Peter. Lady Waitfort is below Sir, enquiring for that Lady, or my maſter.

Flor. For my brother?

Peter. Yes, Sir, and my Lord has ſent to know if her Ladyſhip or Mr. Vapid has been here. He was in bed, but on receiving a letter, got up, and will be here in an inſtant.

Louiſa. For Heaven's ſake Mr. Florivelle, let me retire I cannot ſupport the conflict.

Flor. Promiſe to recall your ſpirits and you ſhall.

Louiſa. What I can do I will

Flor. Then know no apprehenſions, for on my life you ſhall not be diſturb'd. (*Leads her to the door of the library and talks in dumb ſhew.*)

Vap. (*from the cloſet*) Peter, Peter, can't you releaſe me?

Peter. No, Sir, don't move, you'll ruin every thing.

Vap. Then give me that candle—I've got a pen and ink, and I think I can finiſh my Epilogue.

Peter. Here Sir, (*giving the candle.*)

Kap. That curſt half line " Die all—die nobly !" (*Peter ſhuts him in.*)

Flor. (*ſits at table and drinks*) ſo now the ſtorm begins, and I'll have ſome ſport with the enemy—here ſhe comes.

Enter LADY WAITFORT.

Chairs Peter—chairs ! Sit down Ma'am, you honour me exceedingly.

Lady W. Where's your brother Sir, I inſiſt on ſeeing him.

Enter LORD SCRATCH.

Lord S. There ſhe is, in a man's lodgings at midnight ! here's treatment ?

Lady W. My Lord I came here in ſearch of Louiſa, who has been betray'd from my power.

Lord S. Look'ye my Lady read that letter, and then ſay if we ſhan't both cut a figure in the print ſhops.

Lady W. (*taking the letter.*) Ha ! 'tis Willoughby's hand ! reads " Lady Waitfort, I have only time to tell you is gone to Neville's lodgings, to meet a perſon ſhe has long had a paſſion for, follow her and be convinced of her duplicity." Oh the villain ! Well my Lord, and pray who is the man I came to meet.

Lord S. Why who ſhou'd it be but the ſtage ruffian, if there was a ſopha in the room, my word on't he'd pop from behind it—Zounds that fellow will lay ſtraw at my door every nine months.

Lady W. This is fortunate (*aſide*) well Sir, if I diſcover Louiſa, I hope you'll be convinc'd I came here to redeem her—and not diſgrace myſelf. Tell me Sir immediately, where ſhe's conceal'd.

Flor.

Flor. Sit down ma'am, ſit down—drink—drink then we'll talk over the whole affair—there is no doing buſineſs without wine—come " here's the glory of gallantry" I'm ſure you'll both drink that.

Lady W. No trifling Sir,—tell me where ſhe is concealed, nay then I'll examine the apartments myſelf—(*goes to the door of the library*) the door lock'd, give me the key Sir !

Flor. (*drinking.*) The glory of gallantry !

Lord S. Hear me Sir, if the lady is in that apartment, I ſhall be convinc'd that you and your brother are the ſole authors of all this treachery—if ſhe is there by the honour of my anceſtors ſhe ſhall be Willoughby's wife to-morrow morning.

Flor. (*Riſing*) Shall ſhe my Lord ! pray were you ever in Italy ?

Lord S. Why ? Coxcomb ?

Flor. Becauſe I'm afraid youv'e been bitten by a tarantula—you'll excuſe me—but the ſymptoms are wonderfully alarming ! there is a blazing fury in your eye, a wild emotion in your countenance, and a green ſpot on your noſe.

Lord S. Damn the green ſpot ! open that door immediately—I am a peer and have a right to look at every thing.

Flor. (*ſtanding before the door*) No Sir, this door muſt not be open'd.

Lord S. Then I'll forget my peerage and draw my ſword.

Flor. (*To Lady Waitfort, who is going to interfere,*) don't be alarm'd ma'am—I'll indulge him for my own amuſement—mear trout fiſhing to me ma'am—come my lord, I'll give you a ſpecimen of foreign gladiatorſhip, and you ſhall confeſs that Florivelle is the beſt fencer in Europe, don't be alarm'd ma'am, come on.—(*Louiſa ruſhes from the apartment.*)

Louiſa. Hold ! I charge you hold, let not my unhappy fate be the ſource of more calamities !

Lord S. Tis ſhe herſelf ! my lady did not come to meet the madman !

Flor. By the lord ! ma'am you've ruin'd all.

Louiſa.

Louiſa. I know Sir, the conſequence of this diſcovery and I abide by them—but what I have done I can juſtify, and would to heaven all here could do the ſame.

Flor. Indeed I can't tell—I wiſh I was in Italy.

Lord S. Mark me madam, nay tears are in vain, to-morrow ſhall make you the wife of Willoughby, and he ſhall anſwer for your follies—no reply—Sir, (to Florivelle, who is going to ſpeak) I woudn't hear the lord chancellor.

Lady W. Now who is to blame? Oh virtue is ever ſure to meet its reward! come to meet a mad poet indeed! my lord I forgive you only on condition of your ſigning a contract to marry me to-morrow, and Louiſa and Willoughby at the ſame time.

Lord S. I will thou beſt of women!—draw it up immediately, and Neville ſhall ſtarve for his treachery (*Lady Waitfort goes to table and writes.*)

Louiſa. (*falling at Lord Scratch's feet.*) Hear me Sir, not for myſelf but a wrong'd friend I ſpeak—Mr. Neville knows not of my concealment, on my honor; he is innocent. If that lady's wrongs be aveng'd confine the puniſhment to me—I'll bear it; with patience bear it.

Lord S. Let go—let go I ſay! my gorge is riſing again—lady Waitfort make haſte with the contract.

Lady W. It only wants the ſignature—now my Lord.

Flor. Look'ye my lord!—ſhe is the cauſe of all this miſchief, and if you are not loſt.

Lord S. Out of my way—noiſe and nonſenſe!—don't fancy yourſelf in the Houſe of Commons? We're not ſpeaking twenty at a time, here give me the pen—I'll ſign directly, and now. (*As he is going to ſign, Vapid breaks china in the cloſet and ruſhes out with the Epilogue in his hand.*)

Vap. Die all! die nobly! die like demi Gods—Huzza! huzza! huzza! tis paſt, tis done! tis perfect. (*jumps about the ſtage with extravagant tokens of joy.*)

Flor. Huzza! the mad poet at laſt, *ſtop him, whocon.*

Lady W.

Lady W. Confuſion! tell me Sir immediately, what do you mean by this new inſult?

Vap. Die all! die nobly!—die like demi Gods! —Oh 'tis glorious!—ah, old Scratch are you there? Joy, joy! give me joy! I've done your buſineſs the work's paſt, the labour's o'er my boy? think of that maſter Brook, think of that.

Lady W. My lord, I'm vilely treated, I deſire you'll inſiſt on an explanation.

Flor. He can't ſpeak ma'am, (*all this time paſt my Lord is ſlowly walking away.*)

Lady W. How!—are you going to leave we my Lord?

Vap. (*Taking out his common place book.*) Faith this muſtn't be loſt—here's ſomething worth obſerving.

Flor. Don't ſtop him ma'am---in every furrow of his angry brow is written "frailty, thy name is woman" —let him have his way. ——See how ſolemnly he retires.

[*Exit Lord Scratch.*

Lady W. Oh, I ſhall burſt with rage! Mr. Vapid I deſire you'll explain how you came in that cloſet? why don't you anſwer me Sir?

Vap. Your pardon ma'am, I am taking a note of the whole affair---and yet I'm afraid.

Lady W. What are you afraid of Sir.

Vap. That it has been dramatiz'd before---it is certainly not a new caſe!

Lady W. Inſupportable! but I take my leave of you all---I abandon you for ever---I---oh! I ſhall go wild. [*Exit.*

Vap. Exit in a rage.

Flor. Ay follow his lordſhip, "virtue is ever ſure to meet its reward."——Now Mr. Vapid, pray tell us how you came in that cloſet?

Vap. Upon my ſoul I can't—I believe the ſervant hurried me in on your approach.

Flor.

Flor. Then you didn't come to meet lady Waitfort?

Vap. I come to meet lady Waitfort!---no I came to read my Epilogue to Neville, and a wonderful production it is---I'll read it to you——" The tyrant totters, and the ſenate nods" (*walking about with great confidence.*)

Louiſa. To what a ſtrange fatality of circumſtances has her character been expoſed! but vice often finds its puniſhment for a crime never commited, when it eſcapes for thouſands it daily practices.

Flor. Well Miſs Courtney, I hope your apprehenſions are all at an end

Louiſa. Yes, Sir, I ſhall remain for the ſhort time neceſſary to prepare for my journey—and beg I may detain you no longer—I'm afraid I have already been a great intruder.

Flor. No---you have been the occaſion of more happineſs than ever I experienc'd, but you won't leave Bath till you have ſeen my brother.

Louiſa. Oh! I have been cruelly deceived Mr. Florivelle, I have injured your brother ſo much that tho' I wiſh, I almoſt dread to ſee him.

Flor. Then I'll go in ſearch of him, and if I don't reconcile you---come Mr. Vapid will you walk?

Vap. With all my heart!

Flor. (*Taking Vapid by the hand.*) By heaven an honeſt fellow, and if all poets were like you, I'd become one myſelf—Miſs Courtney adieu, expect me to return.

Vap. Madam, good night, if I can be of any ſervice in the dramatic or any other way you may command me.

Flor. Ay, I'll anſwer for him,, he would die to ſerve you.

Vap. Die to ſerve her!—ay die all! die nobly! die like demi gods. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE—*An apartment at* LADY WAITFORT'S.

Enter LADY WAITFORT *and* LETTY.

Lady W. Mr. Vapid not come yet Letty?

Letty. No, madam—but the ſervant who found him at the tavern, ſaid he would be here immediately.

Lady W. I proteſt I'm almoſt weary of them all—See who's there?

Letty. Mr. Vapid at laſt, now pray your ladyſhip, inſiſt on his explaining every thing to my lord.

Lady W. Yes; but vilely as he has treated me, I muſt ſtill be calm.

Lady W. Walk in Sir, walk in.

Vap. No ma'am—I'd rather ſtay here.

Lady W. I beg you'll walk in Mr Vapid.

Vap. (*Enters gently.*)——Pray be ſeated Sir, I have ſomething of conſequence to impart to you.

Vap. I'd never have ventured, but in hopes of ſeeing my dear Marianne.

Lady W. Indeed, I will not detain you a moment.

Vap. Very well ma'am, if that's the caſe, (*ſlowly ſeating himſelf*) it's very alarming! (*Aſide.*)

Lady W.

Lady W. Letty, leave the room and faſten the door.

Vap. No, no, (*turning to Letty*) don't faſten the door I beſeech you.

Lady W. You're very much frighten'd Mr. Vapid! I hope you don't think I've any deſigns againſt you.

Vap. I don't know really ma'am, ſuch things are perfectly dramatic.

Lady W. Well, but I releaſe you from your fears, I'll tell you why I have given you this trouble—my buſineſs Mr. Vapid was to converſe with you on the farcical affair that happen'd at Neville's.

Vap. Farcical!

Lady W. Yes, Sir, the farcical affair that happen'd at Mr. Neville's.

Vap. Farcical! what my Epilogue ma'am! I hope you don't mean to reflect on that!

Lady W. No, Sir, far from it—I have no doubt but it is a very elegant compoſition.

Vap. Doubt! here it is! read it!—the very firſt production of the age! a regular climax of poetic beauty! the laſt line the *ne plus ultra* of genius.

Lady W. But to be ſerious Mr. Vapid.

Vap. Why I *am* ſerious—and I'll tell you Lady Waitfort—'Tis the laſt line of an Epilogue, and the laſt ſcene of a comedy that always diſtracts me—'tis the reconciliation of lovers—there's the difficulty!—you find it ſo in real life I dare ſay?

Lady W. Yes, but Mr. Vapid, this affair concerns me exceedingly, and I wiſh to know what is to be done?

Vap. I'll tell you write a play, and bad as it may poſſibly be, and I dare ſay 'twill be bad enough, yet ſay tis a tranſlation from the French, and interweave a few compliments on the Engliſh, and my life on't it does wonders—do it, and ſay you had the thought from me.

Lady W.

Lady W. Sir, do you mean to inſult me.

Vap. But only be cautious in your ſtyle,—women are in general apt to indulge that warm luxuriancy of fancy they poſſeſs—but do be careful—be decent—if you are not I've done with you.

Lady W. Sir, I'll deſire you'll be more reſpectful—I don't underſtand it at all (*riſing.*)

Vap. Then here comes one that will explain every thing.

" There's in her all that we believe of Heav'n,
Amazing brightneſs, purity and truth,
Eternal joy and everlaſting love."

Enter MARIANNE.

Vap. My dear Marianne my ſweet little partner, I rejoice to ſee you.

Mar. And my dear ſweet Mr. Poet, I rejoice to ſee you!

Lady W. Provoking! hav'nt I told you a thouſand times not to break in upon me when I am alone.

Mar. Alone! My Lady, do you reckon Mr. Vapid nobody then.

Lady W. Suppoſe I ſhou'd, what is it to you!

Mar Then I have no notion of your nobodies—I always thought them harmleſs unmeaning things—but Mr. Vapid's not ſo very harmleſs either—are you Mr. Vapid?

Vap. Indeed ma'am I am not.

Mar. There now I told you ſo—upon my word you rely too much on your time of life—you do indeed—you think becauſe you're a little the worſe for wear, you may truſt yourſelf any where—but you're miſtaken—you're not near ſo bad as you imagine—nay, nay I don't flatter, do I Mr. Vapid.

Vap. Indeed ma'am you do not.

Lady W. Look'ye Miſs—your inſolence is not to be borne—you have been the chief cauſe of all my perplexity!

Mar. Nay aunt, don't ſay that!

Lady W. No matter, your behaviour is ſhameful, and it is high time I exert the authority of a relation —you are a diſgrace to me—to yourſelf and your friends—therefore I'm determin'd to put into execution a ſcheme I have long thought of.

Mar. What is it? ſomething pleaſant I hope.

Lady W. No, but you ſhall retire to a convent, 'till you take poſſeſſion of your fortune.

Mar. A convent! Oh Lord! I can't make up my mind to it, now don't, pray don't think of it—I declare its quite ſhocking!

Lady W. It is a far better place than you deſerve—my reſolution is fix'd, and we ſhall ſee whether a life of ſolitude and auſterity, will not awaken ſome ſenſe of ſhame in you.

Mar. Indeed I can't bear the thoughts of it—Oh do ſpeak to her Mr. Vapid, tell her about the naſty monks now do—A convent! mercy! what a check to the paſſions? Oh! I can't bear it. (*Weeping.*)

Vap. 'Gad here's a ſudden touch of tragedy—pray lady Waitfort, reflect, you can't ſend a young lady to a convent while the theatres are open—ſee it will break the poor girl's heart—Don't weep ſo Marianne!

Mar. I can't help it—it will be the death of me—pray my dear aunt.

Lady W. Not a word—I'm determin'd—to-morrow you ſhall leave this country, and then I have done with you for ever.

Mar. Oh, my poor heart!

Vap. See, ſhe'll faint!

Mar. Oh, oh! (*faints in Lady Waitfort's arms.*)

Lady W. Oh! I have gone too far, what's to be done?

Vap. Some relief immediately, or ſhe'll expire, where ſhall I fly, I'll call the ſervants.

Lady W. No, 'twill be too late—I have ſome drops in the next cloſet may recover her—hold her a moment, and for heaven's ſake take care of her. [*Exit.*

Mar.

Marianne lies in Vapid's arms.)

Vap. Poor girl! how I pity her! I really loved her

Mar. Did you really love me Mr. Vapid?

Vap. Hey day recover'd! here's incident!

Mar. But did you really love me Mr. Vapid.

Vap. Yes, I did—what ſtage effect!

Mar. And wou'd you have really run away with me Mr. Vapid?

Vap. Yes, I really wou'd—a new ſituation!

Mar. Then come along this moment.

Vap. Huſh! here's the old Lady! keep dying as before, and we'll effect the buſineſs—more equivoque!

(*Re-enter Lady Waitfort.*)

Lady W. Well Mr. Vapid, how does ſhe do now? Lord! She's in ſtrong convulſions!

Vap. Yes, ma'am, ſhe's dying! where are the drops?

Lady W. Here Sir!

Vap. There are very few—are there any more of the ſame kind?

Lady W. Yes Sir, plenty!

Vap. Fetch them—'tis the only hope—if you have any hartshorn too, bring a little of that—our feelings will need it all.

Lady W. Very true Mr. Vapid—I declare to you I'm quite ſhock'd! [*Exit.*

Mar. Well, Mr. Vapid—now let's run away—come—why what are you thinking of?

Vap. My laſt ſcene—and I fear!

Mar. What do you fear?

Vap. That it can't be managed—let me ſee—we certainly run away, and ſhe returns—faith I muſt ſee her return.

Mar. No, no, pray let us be gone, think of this another time.

Vap. So I will, it will do for the fourth tho' not for the fifth act—therefore my dear little girl come away, and we'll live and die together!

Mar. Die together!

Vap. Ay, die all! die nobly! die like demi Gods!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter LADY WAITFORT, (*with two large ſmelling bottles.*

Lady W. Here Mr. Vapid, here's the drops!—What gone, mercy on me!—but no matter I wrong myſelf to think of her, I'll follow my Lord, and if he ſtill avoids me, I'll have done with them all for ever—ruin'd by a time-killer!—by a writer of Epilogues!—Oh! I ſhall burſt with diſappointment. [*Exit.*

SCENE—*An apartment in Neville's Houſe.*

Enter LOUISA COURTNEY.

Louiſa. Still in the ſame houſe, yet ſtill afraid to meet him—Oh Neville! my ſuperior in every thing! how can I hope for your forgiveneſs? While you revealed an affection it had done you credit to deny, I concealed a paſſion I might have been proud to confeſs.

Enter VAPID *and* MARIANNE.

Mar. Oh, Miſs Courtney, my ſweet Miſs Courtney! Mr. Vapid has run away with me, and I'm ſo frightn'd for fear of Lady Waitfort.

Louiſa. Yes, She may well alarm you—ſhe has deſtroy'd my peace for ever! but have you ſeen Mr. Neville? Yet why do I aſk?

Vap. Seen Mr. Neville? What does'nt he yet know you are in his lodgings?

Louiſa. No, and I hope never will, the moment his brother returns, I ſhall ſet out for my uncles, and perhaps never ſee him more!

Vap. And why not ſee him Madam.

Lou.

Louiſa. Becauſe I cannot bear the ſight of one I have ſo injured!

Vap. This will do, this will do—mutual equivoque! equal miſunderſtanding! my own caſe exactly.

Mar. Your own caſe Mr. Vapid! Lord you baſe man! have you got a young lady in your lodgings.

Vap. Ridiculous!—don't talk about your ladies, at ſuch an awful time—the very ſituation in my comedy!—the laſt ſcene to a ſyllable—here's an opportunity of improving the denouement.

Enter PETER.

Peter. Ma'am, my maſter is return'd—the occaſion of his delay has been a long interview with Mr. Willoughby—he doesn't know you are here.

Louiſa. Marianne excuſe me, you'll be ſafe from Lady Waitfort here—Indeed I'm very ill.

Mar. Nay, where are you going!

Louiſa. Alas! any where to avoid him.—Farewell! and may you enjoy that happineſs I have for ever loſt. [*Exit.*

Mar. Poor dear girl! I muſtn't leave her thus.—Mr. Vapid, we won't run away 'till ſomething is done for her.

Vap. Go—there's a good girl—follow and comfort her.

Mar. I will. Lord, if they muſt be happy in being friends again, what muſt I be who make them ſo. [*Exit after Louiſa.*]

Vap. The picture before me! all from nature. I muſt heighten his diſtreſs—for contraſt is every thing. Peter, not a word for your life. [*Give him a tap on the cheek.*] Not one word, you dull dog.

Enter NEVILLE.

Nev. Vapid, I'm glad to ſee you! Any letter from my brother?

Peter. No, Sir.

Nev. Nor meſſage?

Peter. No, Sir,

Nev. Then I need doubt no longer—'tis evident he avoids me. Cruel ungenerous Florivelle.

Vap. [*Leaning over his chair.*] Miſs Courtney will never ſee you again!

Nev. I know it—too well I know it—that and that only makes me determine to leave this country for ever.

Vap. You are unhappy then.

Nev. Completely ſo!

Vap. Then ſtop. [*Sits by him.*] She was a divinity, Harry!

Nev. An angel!

Vap. And thus to loſe her!

Nev. S'death, don't torment me; [*riſing.*] my griefs are already beyond bearing!

Vap. It will do—he's as unhappy as I could wiſh.

Peter. I can hold no longer, Sir!

Vap. Huſh, you damn'd dog! you'll ruin the cataſtrophe.

Peter. I don't care—I'll tell him every thing—Sir—Mr. Neville.

Vap. [*Taking hold of Peter and leading him forward.*] Hayk'ye, you villain! do you ever go to a play? Do you ever ſit in the gallery?

Peter. Yes, Sir, ſometimes.

Vap. Then know this is all for your good—you'll applaud this ſome day or other, you dog. Curſe it, won't he be happy enough by and by.—What, you are going abroad, Neville?

Nev. Yes, for ever! Farewell, Vapid!

Vap. Farewell, Neville! Good night. Now for the effect! Miſs Courtney is in the next room.

Nev. What!

Vap. Miſs Courtney is in the next room.

Nev. Louiſa! Is it poſſible?

Vap. There's light and ſhade.—Yes, your brother brought her here, and ſhe expects him to return ev'ry moment.

Nev.

Nev. My brother! Then 'tis he means to marry her—nay, perhaps they are already married.—Heavens! I ſhall go wild!

Vap. Don't go wild—that will ruin the denouement.

Nev. No matter—I'm reſolv'd, I'll bid her farewell for ever. Vapid, 'tis the laſt favour I ſhall aſk of you, give her this letter, and tell her, ſince I have reſented Willoughby's attack upon her honour, I think I may be allowed to vindicate my own, ſtill great as have been my faults, my truth has ſtill been greater, and wherever I wander—

Vap. Here's a flouriſh now. Why you miſunderſtand—ſhe is not married, nor going to be married.

Nev. Come, this is no time for raillery.

Vap. Raillery! Why I am ſerious—ſerious as the laſt act—Zounds! go to her, preſerve the unity of action; marry her directly, and if the cataſtrophe does not conclude with ſpirit, why damn my comedy—damn my comedy, that's all.

Nev. Would to heaven you were in earneſt.

Vap. Earneſt—why there it is now—the women, dear creatures, are always ready enough to produce effect; but the men are ſo curſt undramatic—Go to her—I tell you go to her. Here is my lord and your brother with him. Come go to the lady—make as good an exit as you can. Two flouriſhes—that will do.

[*Exit.*

Enter LORD SCRATCH *and* FLORIVELLE.

Lord S. That curſt dramatic maniac—if I ſee him again—

Flor. My dear uncle, conſent to Harry's marriage, and depend on't, he ſhall trouble you no more.

Lord S. I tell you again, I will not.

Flor. Will you give any hopes of future conſent?

Lord S. By the word of a Peer, I will not.

Vap. Maſter Brook, let me perſuade you—

Lord S.

Lord S. Flames and firebrands! the fiend again!

Vap. Give your conſent, and I'll give Neville a fortune—he ſhall have the entire profits of the different plays in which I intend to introduce yourſelf and the old Lady Hurlothrumbo

Lord S. Oh, That I was not a Peer! If I was any thing elſe, but thank heaven, Louiſa is more averſe to the match than myſelf.

Vap. Is ſhe?

Lord S. Yes, ſhe knows his falſehood, and deſpiſes him.

Vap. What, you are confident of it?

Lord S. Out of my way, Sir, I'll not anſwer you, I'll go take her to town directly.

Vap. Stop, maſter Brook—ſhe's in that room.

Lord S. Where, behind me?

Vap. Yes, there—there. (*pointing.*) Now for it—what an effect! Oh, charming!

Lord S. Opens the door, and diſcovers Neville kneeling to Louiſa, and Marianna with them.

Vap. There, Peter! there's a cataſtrophe! Shakeſpear's invention's nothing to it! applaud it, you dog—applaud it—clap, Peter, clap.

Lord S. What are you at, you impudent raſcal, get out of the room. [*Exit Peter.*

Vap. I ſhould ſet this down, I may forget.

Mar. He has a very bad memory—Lord, I hope he won't forget our marriage.

Nev. Oh, Louiſa, what am I to think?

Louiſa. That I have wrong'd thee Neville.

Flor. My dear Harry, let this be my apology for not having ſeen you before. (*Gives a deed*) Miſs Courtney, ten thouſand joys; and could I have found my brother, you ſhould have ſeen him ſooner.

Nev. Why here is a deed of gift for half your eſtate.

Flor. I know it, but ſay nothing; when you gave me money, five years ago, did I ſay any thing? No, I for-

I forgot it as ſoon as it was over, and ſhould never have recollected at this moment, but for my Lord's inhumanity. Uncle, I thank you, you have made me the happieſt man alive.

Lord S. Don't perplex me, what a compound of folly and generoſity.

Mar. Uncle-in-law, what are your feelings on this occaſion, as my aunt ſays.

Lord S. Feelings! I never knew a Peer have any.

Mar. Didn't you.

Lord S. No, but now I find the contrary; I begin to think I've a heart like other men—it's better to atone for an error than perſiſt in one, therefore give me that deed, Neville. There Sir, (*giving it back to Florivelle*) do you think nobody has eſtates to give away but yourſelf---Louiſa and her fortune are your's Mr. Neville, and after my death you ſhall have all mine---and now there's a curſt burden off my mind.

Mar. Now you're a dear creature! and I won't marry---that's what I won't without conſulting you.

Lord S. You marry? why ſhou'd you marry, and how came you here pray?

Mar. A gentleman run away with me, he is now in the room.

Lord S. In the room! What Florivelle?

Mar. No, behind you (*pointing to Vapid who is writing at the table.*)

Lord S. Ghoſt's and ſpectres! my evil genius!

Mar. Come my dear! hav'nt you almoſt finiſhed?

Vap. (*Riſing*) Yes, the denouement is compleat, and now my dear I reſign myſelf to love and you!

Mar. Come, my good lord! pray give conſent, my huſband will get money tho' I have none.

Lord S. None—I dare ſay he can tell you he will have twelve thouſand pounds in leſs than a year.

Mar. Shall I? Then faith Mr. Vapid, we'll build a theatre of our own—you ſhall write plays and I'll act them.

Enter

Enter ENNUI.

Enn. I've an idea I give you joy Mr. Neville—I mean to kill time by living ſingle and therefore I hope the lady and the borough may be yours.

Mar. Mr. Ennui, I hope you'll pardon me and Sir Harry Huſtle the fatigue we occaſion'd you.

Enn. Don't mention it—yaw! yaw!—the very recollection makes me faint—in fact my lord, I juſt met one of lady Waitfort's ſervants who tells me ſhe has left Bath in a rage.

Flor. I'm afraid ſhe has eſcaped too eaſily.

Lord S. Oh, damn her! never think of her—I can anſwer for her puniſhment being adequate to her crimes—Willoughby has told me all her ſchemes, and if ever I hear her name again; may I looſe my peerage and be forced to dreſs like a gentleman.

Enn. My lord! I've an idea!

Vap. Sir I beg your pardon; but really if you have an idea, I'll be much obliged to you if you'll ſpare it me for my comedy.

Enn. In fact, I don't comprehend, I have read your die-all Epilogue, and——

Vap. Oh then Sir, I don't wonder at your having ideas!

Enn. Sir, I ſhall expect ſatisfaction!

Vap. Satisfaction! Sir, if any one inſults me I'll lick 'em on the ſtage Sir, that's my way.

Lord S. Come, come never mind him, the poor fellow is always talking of what he never had—Ideas indeed! —but come my boy Neville, may you be as happy as I am—I'm the happieſt Peer alive and *I*—when I die.

Flor. Ay, I'll anſwer for his happineſs by my own —Miſs Courtney, notwithſtanding my brother; I will ſtill live in your eye, die in your lap—and be buried

ried in your heart, and moreover I will ſtay with you both in England, and never return to Italy again.

Lou. Yes Florivelle,

" And thus behold what ev'ry hour ſhall prove
" That real happineſs is—mutual love.

FINIS.

26
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AUG

EPILOGUE,

Spoken by VAPID.

GAD ſo, I'm caught—the wags have ſhut me out,
But why? my part's to ſcribble, not to ſpout,
I cou'd write Epilogues for all who ſeek 'em,
But may my play be damn'd if I ſpeak 'em,
Die all, die nobly! *that's the plan my boys,*
Fun, fire and pathos—metre, mirth and noiſe!
To make you die with laughter, or the hicups,
Tickle your favourites, or ſmack your tea-cups,
Vapid's the Man—have at you great and ſmall,
Here will I ſtand, and dramatize you all.
Come forth my javelin (pulls out a pencil) *ſtrike the aſtoniſh'd town,*
Say, ſhall'd cut you up or write you down?
Nay never tremble, gents—nor ſlink away,
'Tis what we authors ſuffer every day;
Stop that thin gemmy in the thickſet coat,
Him with the towel underneath his throat,
If ſo tied up he plays the willing fool,
I'll hang him up at once to ridicule,
And you my little madam in the bonnet
Don't flinch—I'll have you down depend upon it;
While thus ſo furbelow'd a ſcreen you keep,
Not one behind can get a ſingle peep;
'Sb'ood when my play appears what work there'll be,
What an overflowing Houſe methinks I ſee!
Here box-keeper—are theſe my places?—No,
Madam Van Bulk *has taken all that row,*
Zounds! how you ſqueeze! of what, d'ye think one made is,
Is this your wig, Sir? No, it's that there Lady's,

Then the ſide boxes,---what delightful rows,
Peers, poets, nabobs, Jews, and prentice beaux---
Alderman Cramp a gouty rich old cit,
With his young bride ſo lovingly will ſit,
While a gay rake who ſees the happy pair,
A bliſs ſo wonderful reſolves to ſhare;
He whiſpers Madam, you've a charming ſpouſe,
So neat in limb, and then ſo ſmooth in brows,
Sir, I don't underſtand you——what ſay dove?
Nothing my duck I'd only dropt my glove,
To-morrow at the fruit-ſhop—*will you come?*
At twelve o'Clock---lord Sir, how you preſume,
Who's that ſcroudges?---you ſhan't ſhove my wife,
I ſhove her!---a good joke upon my life.
Leave him to me---how dare you thus to treat me?
I dare do any thing, if you'll but meet me,
Me meet a man!—I ſhoud'nt have thought of you,
At twelve indeed—I can't get out till two.
Then all the parties whether pleas'd or not,
Turn towards the ſtage, and muſe upon the plot,
To catch the author at ſome that or therefore,
And praiſe or damn him without why or wherefore,
If ſuch friends cheriſh, or ſuch foes aſſail,
Who knows, even my Comedy may fail.
Shou'd then my writing, prove but time miſpent.
O, may I act to pleaſe, and I'm content.